Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party June 1977 35 pence

Editorial Comments

Prices of Provision 1795

Mutton	*10½d pr lb*
Lamb	*11d Do*
Veal	*11½d Do*
Beef	*12d Do*
Small Beer	*2d pr Quart*
Bread	*12d pr Quartern loaf*

God save the King

Journeymen's Wages 1795

Carpenters	*12sh pr Week*
Shoemakers	*10sh Do*
Bakers	*9sh Do*
Gardeners	*8sh Do*
Smiths	*8sh Do*
Husbandmen	*7sh Do*

The BRITISH BUTCHER
Supplying JOHN BULL with a Substitute for BREAD
vide Mefsuage to Lord Mayor

BILLY the BUTCHER'S advice to JOHN BULL.
Since Bread is so dear, (and you say you must eat)
For to save the Expence you must live upon Meat;
And as Twelve Pence the Quartern you can't pay for Bread,
Get a Crown's worth of Meat—— it will serve in it's stead.

Billy the Butcher (Prime Minister William Pitt) suggests a substitute for bread. (Gillray print, 1795 from James Klugmann Collection)

Irene Brennan — Some Problems of Revolutionary Strategy

Tetsuzo Fuwa — Scientific Socialism and the Question of Dictatorship

John Tagg — Marxism and Art History

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Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

Volume 21, Number 6

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The front cover was designed by Pat Cook. The Gillray 1795 print is from the James Klugmann Collection. The butcher is William Pitt then Prime Minister.

SOME ARTICLES PLANNED FOR FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Doug Bourn	**Problems of Marxist History**
John Bowden	**The Growth of Authoritarianism**
Dave Cook	**The Battle of Kinder Scout**
Hymie Fagan	**The Work of the Communist Party in Parliament, 1945-50**
Andrew Ferns	**Spain Today, Glasgow Tomorrow**
Renzo Galeotti	**A Painter's View of Russian Art**
Jeremy Hawthorn	**Ideology, Science and Literature**
Christopher Hill	**Forerunners of Socialism in the 17th Century English Revolution**
Eric Hobsbawm	**Gramsci and Political Theory**
Arnold Kettle	**Lawrence, Leavis and Life**
James Klugmann	**Marxism, Reformism and the State**
Mary McIntosh	***Modern Trends in Sociology***
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Hilary and Steven Rose	**Dialectics of Nature**
Kurt Schacht	**The Role of the SPD in the Federal Republic of Germany**
Brian Simon	**Marxism and the Crisis of Education**
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Julian Tudor Hart	**The British Working Class and the Medical Profession**
Ray Volleamere	**Marx's Mature Theory of Alienation**
Robert Walton	**The Civil Service**
Jack Woddis	**Problems of Alliance**
Charles Woolfson	**Culture, Language and the Human Personality**

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Editorial Comments

THE publication of the 50 volume English edition of the Collected Works of Marx and Engels goes steadily ahead. Volume 7[1]—the first of three containing their writings during the revolutionary years 1848-49—has just been published.

1848 was the year of the *Communist Manifesto*, the classic formulation of their view of history, of capitalist society, of the revolutionary role of the working class.

1848 and 1849 were the years when Europe was aflame with revolution in Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Hungary, and in this volume Marx and Engels, using historical materialism as an analytical tool, outline the class forces and conflicts involved, explain what took place in terms of the economic, political and social interests of those concerned.

Readers will find this volume not merely fascinating as historical analysis, but of surprising contemporary relevance. For questions of class power, the role of the state, dictatorship and democracy, what is involved in Revolution and the role of elected legislatures in it, what is needed to defeat counter-revolution—discussed in the context of bourgeois revolution—have great importance for our own topical controversies around these questions today.

NEXT MONTH CUL (9)

The ninth Communist University of London is being held on July 9-17 at the University of London Union. The political and ideological importance of this event is shown by the participation, last year, of over 1,000 people in the discussions around various aspects of Marxism.

This year the CUL is being broadened out in a number of ways, allowing a whole range of people to participate in the discussion from those who have just begun to study a particular discipline to those who are well-versed in the recent Marxist and non-Marxist developments in that area.

A number of new features have been incorporated into the CUL to encompass these different aspects of its approach. Firstly, a number of the specialist courses have been divided into two to provide for course-critique sessions and for sessions on Marxist developments in particular subject areas. In this way both new entrants into the discipline and the old hands can both learn from and contribute to Marxism in that area.

Secondly, a number of new courses are being offered—Political Science, Anthropology, Sexual Politics and Recent Developments in Marxist Theory have all been added to the already wide range of subjects available.

Thirdly, the general courses have been widened to include a number of important political issues in which there is interest at the present time: Fascism, the National Question, Sexuality and Human Nature and the British Labour Movement are among the additions. There is also a special course entitled "Sixty Years of Soviet Power" to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

Finally, the evening events have been extended so that each evening there will be a number of political discussions as well as films, theatre groups and various kinds of music.

CUL continues to provide a forum for discussing the theoretical and political alternatives that Marxism offers to the dominant theories taught in the colleges as well as creating the opportunity to participate through all the courses in the creative development of Marxist theory.[2]

[1] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels—*Collected Works*, Vol. 7, Lawrence & Wishart, £3.00

[2] Prospectuses and further information are obtainable from Sally Hibbin, Organiser CUL9, 16 King Street, London WC2E 8HY.

Editorial Apologies

The weight of the articles has this month compressed our *Editorial Comments* into one page. We hope to resume the normal-length *Comments next month.*

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Strategic Questions:

Some Problems of Revolutionary Strategy

Irene Brennan

(The author is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the Polytechnic of Central London. She is a member of the Political Committee of the Communist Party.)

During the last few years we have seen some very important changes that have raised important questions of strategy. In Western Europe, there has been a decisive shift to the left in France and Italy: in France there could well be a left government there after next year's elections and in Italy the Communist Party has had to grapple with the question of their participation in the government. Fascist régimes have been ended in Portugal and Greece, and Spain is slowly moving towards a form of bourgeois democracy. These developments have led to detailed analysis by the various parties of issues like the building of left unity and a wider democratic alliance, the nature of the state in advanced capitalist countries and how control over state institutions can be won, and the various phases that will probably develop in the revolutionary process in their own country, as well as internationally. In other parts of the world, the success of the national liberation movements has led to a deeper understanding that the struggle for socialism will take that form in countries battling against neocolonialism.

Problems Under Discussion

The variety and complexity of experience now available to the world communist movement has led to intense debate about these and other related questions. This has at times taken on a decidedly polemic, though still fraternal, character. For example, Suslov, the Soviet theoretician, has made some serious criticisms of the strategy of the Italian Party. Some of the Western European Parties have raised questions about the nature of socialist democracy within the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Implicit in this is a criticism of the strategy being employed for the building of socialism. Much of the debate about what is or is not a revolutionary strategy relates to a prior analysis of what is a revolutionary process. For a strategy to be correct, it must adapt itself to the revolutionary process as determined by the existing material conditions (which includes cultural and political realities). The objectives of the revolution need first to be defined and then the situation analysed to see how these might be realised. Some of the arguments about 'revisionist' or 'dogmatic' positions are clarified if this sort of work is done.

This article was written as a contribution to that discussion which is currently taking place both within our own party and internationally, on what are the criteria to employ when assessing a strategy for socialist revolution. It is not an attempt to examine the new draft of *The British Road to Socialism*, nor does it seek to offer any definitive positions on theoretical questions. Its main aim is to provoke debate and discussion. If it succeeds in that then I shall be well pleased.

Below, I have tried to outline something of a general character on this question. I have also discussed the relation between the goals of a revolutionary strategy and the methods used to achieve them, not simply in terms of what is pragmatic but also raising the question of how the *principled* relation between means and ends, methods and goals is defined. In any examination of strategy it is essential to try and clarify the pattern of dialectical development: the relation between quantitative and qualitative change. That means looking at concepts like 'a revolutionary break' or 'revolutionary transition'. Is there such a thing as *the* revolutionary situation? And how do we deal with the notion of phases in the revolutionary process? Although there may be a choice of tactics within a given situation and that choice may in turn influence how revolutionary goals are realised, there is really no choice with regard to the actual *mode* of the struggle; that is determined not by the movement itself, but by the circumstances in which it finds itself. The recognition of the mode of struggle is therefore vital for the delineation of a correct strategy. Below I briefly examine some of the important questions related to this issue.

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THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS DEFINED IN TERMS OF ITS END RESULTS

It is clearly not enough to define the end of the revolutionary process as the achievement of socialism; the term has been used in too many different ways by people with markedly different political positions for us to be able to accept that suggestion with equanimity. We need to define socialism itself or at least what are its basic characteristics. Various groups on the left offer their alternatives; for some socialism is the destruction of the monetary system and the dismantling of central government administration; others see it as 'workers' control' operating within a syndicalist framework. Even leading right-wing social democrats use the term to refer to what they anticipate as a higher stage of capitalism, where gross inequalities of wealth and opportunity will have been removed, but where the structures of power, both economic and political, will remain more or less as they are now.

On the other hand, marxists see the establishment of socialism only as a result of revolutionary changes in society. The transfer of ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange from the hands of the capitalist class to those of the working class and their allies forms the socio-economic basic. But it needs to be accompanied by a transfer of political power, in particular, control over the organs and institutions of the state. That implies the extension of democracy in all areas of life, but especially in vital areas of economic and political power. The form that that will take will vary; in different countries with different traditions and institutions, and where the mode of struggle for socialism has not been the same, the expression of socialist democracy will not, could not, be alike. The basis for class division needs to be eradicated, not only economically and politically, but also in the areas of culture and social life generally.

The Forms Vary

These fundamental changes are all interrelated; they can only be sustained and given a permanent character if they are realised together. That is not to say that they are all achieved at the same pace: the eradication of ideas and attitudes based on capitalism is a gradual process and is part of the building of a socialist society, as is the extension and deepening of democracy. These gradual changes depend on the other changes in economic and political life, although they can begin to effect the society before the complete transfer of economic and political power. From our knowledge of socialist revolutions it is clear that the political struggle at times is directed more to one area of fundamental change, at other times, to others. But if any change is seen as pre-eminently important it would be the winning of effective political control over the state apparatus. That is a *sine qua non* of the *permanent* transfer of economic power and of the establishment of other fundamental changes.

It is important to define a revolutionary process in terms of its end results, rather than in terms of its mode, or pattern of development, because the very different conditions in different countries mean that there is no one model of *how* socialism can be achieved. However, there is agreement among the international revolutionary movement about *what* is to be achieved, although the form of it will vary according to local conditions. A correct revolutionary strategy is one which has identified its aims correctly and adopted the appropriate methods, in the particular situation, to achieve those aims. That is the important criterion.

THE ADOPTION OF THE APPROPRIATE METHODS TO ACHIEVE THE ENDS OF SOCIALISM

The ends of the revolutionary process are, of necessity, intimately linked with the decision about what constitutes appropriate methods and correct strategy. This statement is a truism, but, in spite of that, can bear repetition. Proper methods of work for a revolutionary movement are those which more effectively achieve the goals of socialism and not those that *seem* to have a more revolutionary appearance. Lenin once reproached some Russian bolsheviks for their failure to understand that truth: "By your revolutionary sloganising you will lose the Revolution" (*On a Revolutionary Phrase*, 1918). This sort of mistake usually occurs when a particular tactic or aspect of a strategy is seen, not in its relation to the strategy as a whole, but as a sort of symbolic representation and enactment of the whole struggle. An example: ultra-leftist and anarchist deliberately contrived confrontations with the police. They take on that symbolic character; the participants move in the realms of ritual rather than in the world political activity directed towards given ends. Of course, on this sort of occasion the rituals are political as are the symbols used, and reflect in an indirect way political realities, but their effect is, more often than not, the opposite of what is supposedly intended. This is not to say that political rituals, and symbols, even myths, may not be of value in politics, but they are no substitute for correct methods of work defined within a strategic analysis.

Ends and Means

The relation between the end and the means and

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methods used to achieve it is not a mechanical one. In some situations there may be only one way of achieving a particular goal, but very often this is not the case: a number of options may be open (this is more true at the 'microscopic' rather than the 'macroscopic' level). However, there remains a *dialectic* relation between means and end. The means used subtly modify a given end. Therefore a choice of methods employed to arrive at a particular goal has an importance beyond the immediate tactical demands of the situation; it can cast a light, or shadow, on future events. And the decision itself reveals how the final goal is seen by those striving to achieve it. Which is why differences about tactics are usually associated, at least in some measure, with differences about matters of principle.

However, there are times when the choice of method is restricted to one we would prefer not to use, but it remains the only one possible. The black nationalists trying to bring an end to the white minority régime in Rhodesia were unwilling to turn to armed struggle to achieve their goal. However, they have come to understand that it is now the only way left open to them. The whole *mode* of struggle has now changed and that will have decisive effect on the kind of political settlement which will bring an end to the Smith régime and establish black majority rule as well as influencing the course of events in the rest of Southern Africa and even internationally.

Means and ends are not only dialectically related; particular means are very often also ends in themselves. We do not, after all, have in mind only long-term goals; an overall strategy includes ends which are part of the development of the strategy, but desirable in themselves. And to choose an end, however minor that may be, is to do more than to make a pragmatic decision about what is the best tool for a particular purpose. Choosing an end implies a decision of principle, and such decisions become incorporated into experience and provide a framework of reference.

Struggles around the establishment of trade union organisation, as well as particular social, economic or democratic reforms, have taken on this character for the British labour movement. The long fight to establish and defend trade unions has given the British working class an identity, a history, a self-consciousness which will influence further battles. The winning of trade union rights, the shortening of the working day, improvements in factory conditions, as well as being good in themselves, have all helped to develop the movement. Bourgeois critics of Marxism have expressed contempt for the programme of reforms outlined in the Communist Manifesto because many of them were later introduced under capitalism. These critics wish to make a complete division between the revolutionary struggle, on the one hand, and the fight for particular reforms on the other. But revolutionaries make no such artificial distinction. Engels welcomed the winning of the universal (male) franchise; he thought that it could transform the political situation and make it easier to achieve a peaceful revolution by using political methods which avoided armed insurrection. Marx pointed out that the gains won by the labour movement, such as the shortening of the working day, not only benefited the workers immediately, but the struggle itself had helped to build up working-class organisation and to educate working people. Marxists have attacked 'reformists', not because they have advocated or fought for particular reforms, but because in doing so they have tried to deflect attention from the more important revolutionary goals and have divided and misled the movement.

Alliances that are made during the course of the struggle also demonstrate decisions of principle. From time to time alliances may be made that are of a transient nature but they are nearly always of no great importance. Crucial alliances not only help to build the movement, or provide a protection during critical periods, they are also alliances of *principle* which should continue after the introduction of socialism. For example, if we call for an alliance between the working class and sections such as small farmers, trades and businessmen, we need to recognise that this means that such groups have a place in socialism; that their interests will be defended in a socialist society. They are not simply allies because they are in revolt against monopoly capitalism. Or again, if communists urge that there should be maximum co-operation between the women's movement and the labour movement in the struggle for socialism, this is not just because the women's movement is able to mobilise women but because the struggle for women's liberation is itself vital in the liberating of all members of society and that is ultimately what socialism is about. The alliances that are made in the struggle to achieve socialism will have a profound effect upon the kind of society that will be constructed later.

Politics and Morals

There are those who feel uneasy when people begin to talk of 'principles' in a discussion of political strategy; they suspect that moral judgments may be being substituted for political action and pious phrases for political analysis. Now it is quite true that political objectives should not be confused with moral ideas or generalised moral attitudes (the danger of this can be seen at those conferences in the labour movement where

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moral rhetoric replaces political decision). However, I must admit that the revulsion of certain marxists from the use of moral terminology of whatever kind strikes me as rather odd.

When Marx and Engels criticised bourgeois morality they were not outlawing *all* moral judgments, no more than the condemnation of forms of bourgeois culture is a rejection of *all* culture. Looked at from a certain point of view, the decision to pursue a political objective is also a moral decision (good or bad). But not all moral judgments are political in character. Politics deals with what is *possible* of achievement either in the short or long term, and not with abstract evaluations unconnected with any real programme of action. Not that these are always reprehensible. It is perfectly possible, indeed desirable, to take up a moral attitude about something on which one can do nothing—historical events, for example, such as the slave trade, the genocide of the Jews, or the religious witch-hunts under early capitalism. Or again one can perfectly well have moral ideals without being able to put forward any concrete programme to bring them to realisation, e.g. the ending of work that is drudgery or the establishment of world government, based on free and peaceful co-operation.

There is nothing at all irrational about making moral judgments and having moral ideals which do not apply to what is concretely possible. Indeed, it is important that human beings are encouraged to use their moral imagination; it deepens and sharpens their perceptions and judgments about what *is* practical. Just as the practice of science requires the tangential operation of imagination, so does politics, and an aspect of political imagination is moral imagination, but just as science is not a matter of hunches, neither is politics simply an expression of moral principles.

FABIANISM—AN INSTRUCTIVE CASE HISTORY

Bernstein is credited with that classic statement of revisionism "the movement is everything, the end nothing". I suppose the crude opposite of that would be "the end is everything, the means irrelevant". Both statements are equally false. They disregard the fundamental interplay between tactics and strategy, means and ends, short- and long-term objectives. However, not all revisionists are unconcerned about the need for revolutionary objectives. The early Fabians had aims very similar to those of the marxists of the time: they wished to have placed under public ownership the key areas of the economy: they argued for a fundamental redistribution of wealth: they anticipated that under socialism there would be a socialised civil society and that the state machinery would be brought under democratic control.

Were then their differences with the marxists simply of a tactical nature or did they include matters of principle? The major difference was in the analysis of political power (or the apparent lack of analysis in the Fabians' case). Whereas marxists saw the gaining of political power, and in particular the wresting of control of the state apparatus from the grip of the ruling class as crucially important, an objective which dominated much of their strategy, the Fabians comfortably accepted the inevitability of a socialised economy which they thought would necessarily be accompanied by political changes which would establish socialism. They failed to recognise the class nature of the state machine which they saw as a neutral instrument of government. This failure sprang from their lack of attention to the balance of class forces and the development of class struggle.

Political Objectives

The Fabians are often criticised for their 'gradualism'. In my view, too much emphasis is placed on that. (Below I touch on the problems of analysing a development of a revolutionary process, both in terms of quantitative as well as qualitative change.) But what is true is that this type of gradualism seems to have been based upon a vulgar and mechanical materialism which disregarded the political and class forces within society. (This is not entirely true of all Fabians; Shaw seems to have adopted a kind of élitist idealism.) But what was true of all of them was pragmatism which disguised a thoroughgoing utopianism about the nature of political change. That utopianism penetrated both their strategy and their analysis of the immediate situation.

So the Fabian movement suffered the fate of those movements whose members are unclear about their *political* objectives and how they might be achieved; it gradually abandoned socialist aims and sank into mediocre conformity with the *status quo*. The Fabian movement is an outstanding example of how the failure to correctly analyse the revolutionary process, especially the nature of *political* power, and how it might be transferred, meant that there is no coherent strategy. In this kind of revisionism, political objectives cease to be political objectives and become instead generalised moral ideals. Without clear, long-term aims it is impossible to have a coherent political strategy and political work degenerates into *ad hoc* responses to situations as they arise, or becomes fragmented into unrelated projects. The link between long-term goals and immediate activity is

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broken; the two exist independently of one another, and therefore the character of each suffers a fundamental change.

There are many within the labour movement who have no clear revolutionary and political objectives but who nevertheless count themselves socialists. That is because they see their position as one based on acceptance of a moral ideal. But for revolutionaries, moral ideals, although they are necessary and play a vital role are not sufficient to provide a framework for political work. For that we need specific goals related to a strategy which itself is based on an analysis of the possibilities of achieving them within the given situation. To have no clear strategy is to abandon revolutionary analysis for a kind of instinctive empiricism, linked with moral idealism. The irony of the position is that this is often presented as clear-headed realism, as opposed to woolly-minded revolutionary ideas.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

"A socialist revolution is not a single act; it is a *period* of turbulent political and economic changes, of intense class struggle" (Lenin: *On the Slogan of a United States of Europe*, p. 1, my italics). And one might add that the revolutionary period itself preceded by a process of change which is marked by decisive crises, confrontations and victories. Many communists still seem to believe that the Russian revolution was made in "ten days that shook the world". There is no doubt that those ten days were a vital period for the socialist revolution but the revolution wasn't made then. Nor was the transfer of *political* power achieved; the winning of state power was a rather more complicated operation in a country whose very size introduced problems of communication, where administration had broken down in many areas and where some sections of the army were not under any kind of central authority, and other sections were prepared to defect to the counter-revolutionaries.

The February revolution, the October revolution, the decisive victories of the wars of intervention, the establishment of the Soviet state: all these were crucial in the revolutionary period in Russia. And if one were to analyse the revolutionary process there it would not be sufficient merely to study the period of revolutionary transition itself but also the period which preceded it. A revolutionary process always has deep roots within a country's history which reach far back and take their sustenance from many different sources; it is not a shallow-rooted plant springing up overnight, only to flower and die away. Of course, certain key events take on a symbolic character for the movement—that is only natural—and the storming of the Winter Palace, I suppose, has that sort of symbolic power.

Decisive Breaks

I would agree with the view put forward by Santiago Carrillo in the book *Dialogue on Spain* (p. 197) that there is not one decisive break during the revolutionary process, but several. To see the revolutionary process in terms of only one crucial break, proceeded by a period of gradual change is to think in terms of an abstract syllogism, as Lenin put it in his commentary on Hegel (*Philosophical Notebooks*, Collected Works, Vol. 38, p. 177 and p. 110). He goes on to argue that neither Hegel or Marx ever speak of development in the crude terms of thesis, antithesis, syllogism; Marx was concerned with the many-sided aspects of the struggle, with identifying what is the most important arena at any given time and how a victory there might be used to break through into a new phase of the revolutionary process.

To take another example: the long-drawn-out struggle in Vietnam where the fight for national liberation and the battle for socialism became inextricably interlinked and where it would be difficult to single out one crisis and say: that was *the* one. But it is perfectly possible, on the other hand, to point to several periods when the struggle entered a qualitatively new phase. Each entry into a new phase is linked with the winning of gains but it is not always accompanied by advances in other fields.

It may produce for some time a kind of imbalance in society. We might take the example of the English bourgeois revolution as a very good case in point. The political settlement of 1688 marked the end of the period of revolutionary change, but for over a century there had been an imbalance between the *economic* power of the new class which they had gained very largely as a result of the changes in land ownership associated with the dissolution of the monasteries, and their political *power* which was only firmly established after the upheavals of the Civil War and the Commonwealth period were resolved in 1688. It seems extremely unlikely that similarly long periods of imbalance will characterise socialist revolutions because that kind of separation of economic and political power would be well nigh impossible in advanced capitalism, but periods of imbalance are, without doubt, present in all revolutionary processes.

Uneven Development

Marxists have long referred to the principle of uneven development. This has usually been used to analyse and explain differences between dif-

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ferent societies at different stages of development, but it is also true of countries at roughly the same stage of development. For example, in France and Italy the development of a unified trade union movement has lagged behind the establishment of mass communist parties with very substantial electoral support. In Britain, the reverse is true. These differences have to be explained in terms of past history and traditions, and present social, economic and political circumstances. Within each country the imbalance between different forms of working-class organisation is expressed differently. Nevertheless, an advance in one area, although it may not have an immediate direct effect on other areas, does always produce some kind of wider effect. Althusser has argued that this is sometimes one which he calls 'dislocated', that is, it has a sort of sideways repercussion on events.

At times, the militancy of certain sections of workers will get more immediate popular response from students than from other sections of workers, or international events arouse more interest than home affairs. For instance, although 1968 was a crucial year for the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland, it tended to be overshadowed by events in Vietnam and the campuses of Europe, as far as demonstrations of support in Britain were concerned, in spite of the fact that a British Government was directly responsible for Northern Ireland but not for the developments elsewhere. One could write a book on why that sort of emphasis occurred in British society at that time. It would be a work that would bring out some of the more profound features of British society for that sort of emphasis is not arbitrary. If 'dislocations' arise, then it must be that certain blockages stand in the way of the development of a more straightforward chain of reaction. The analysis of such blockages and why they occur is a vital part of revolutionary work and the drawing up of an appropriate revolutionary strategy.

However, there may be complicated developments that are not explained by the theory of ideological or organisational blockages but in a positive way by the particular history and culture of a people or a movement. In that context, events can take on a significance far more weighty than appearances would suggest; they become political symbols which move masses into political action. And as Marx said: "when ideas grip the masses they become material force."

The imprisonment of the Pentonville five became that kind of symbol as far as the London dock workers were concerned. The execution of the leaders of the Dublin 1916 rising aroused the Irish people, who had been left cold by the rising itself. It appealed to deeply-rooted romantic nationalism linked with a naïve catholic belief in the value of seemingly useless sacrifices: "the blood of the martyres is the seed of the church." The symbol became more important precisely because the leaders, especially Pearse, appealed to that tradition in making their declaration to the people. After all, many Irish people have been killed by the British authorities: what made this occasion different was that it was a conscious appeal to national symbols and values. Knowing the ideas, values and myths that move the people is a vital thing in politics.

THE STRUGGLE AROUND THE STATE AND THE REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITION

We have seen above how the Fabians neglected the analysis of political and class forces to concentrate upon social and economic reforms. Engels in a letter to Bloch (1890) has some pertinent things to say on a similar kind of development among marxists. He argued that he and Marx had emphasised the economic basis of society because it had been entirely neglected, but that to talk of revolutionary change simply in terms of socio-economic change was to make a grave mistake. He pointed out that although social institutions arise in certain social and economic conditions they can develop a relative autonomy and that the political and ideological struggle that takes place within them is very important and can at times influence the society as a whole. Therefore, the revolutionary process has to be understood in terms of all those institutions of society which develop some form of political struggle within themselves that is either directly or indirectly related to revolutionary change. The dialectical relations that exists between these various social institutions and the political and economic life of the society to a large extent determine the imbalance that we have been discussing above.

If we examine the various institutions within capitalist society, it is clear that the analysis of organs and institutions of the state plays a key role in determining what is a correct strategy. The relation that these have with the rest of society can vary enormously. For example, in 1917 the state in Russia was extremely weak; the stresses of the First World War had led to great fissures in its structure—indeed, parts of the state apparatus had more or less ceased to function. In this situation, it was possible to make a fairly quick all-out attack on the state: what Gramsci was later to call a war of manoeuvre and movement.

However, in the countries where state monopoly capitalism has evolved a very subtle and extended complex of state institutions the strategy must be entirely different. This was foreseen by Engels in his account of the state in *Socialism: Utopian and*

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Scientific. He also saw the implication of it, namely that it would produce its own internal contradiction: "The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution to the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution."

'War of Position'

However, the contradictions are not just economic in nature; the state now exercises a substantial influence in the realms of education and social services where it employs millions of workers. The ideological and political struggles of society as a whole are necessarily reflected to a greater or lesser extent within such institutions. Indeed they may be initiated within them. Even the repressive aspect of the state—the police, the law and the army cannot remain immune to general developments. This is shown by the way in which we have been able to force through progressive legislation and the repeal of reactionary laws in Britain. Although this is not of profound political importance, nevertheless it should not be overlooked. The police are slowly groping to a more democratic police force in their demands for trade union rights. In France, the contingents of the gendarmerie participating in demonstrations have been an exciting new feature of the demonstrations there during the last period.

As political life moves further to the left, and involves millions of ordinary people in struggles around class demands and democratic demands, so will this undermine the political basis of the army and introduce all kinds of internal divisions within it. This erosion of state power from without and within is what Gramsci was, I believe, referring to when he talked about the need for a 'war of position'. That is not to say that such a strategy will not anticipate crucial periods of confrontation, as well as the steady and multifaceted challenge to capitalism. We could contrast this kind of strategy with the assault of state institutions during a national liberation struggle where there may also be a 'war of position' but of an entirely different character.

When Althusser is discussing the phenomenon of 'dislocation' he argues that within a revolutionary situation various elements that had hitherto been in a state of dislocation come together into fusion. Now although it is perfectly true that in crucial stages of the revolutionary process there is a coming together of different aspects of the struggle against capitalism and that this is accompanied by a much intensified mass participation, it seems to me to be a mistake to assume that this state of 'fusion' incorporates all the contradictions of society.

If Althusser means this—and to be fair I am not sure about that—then he would be dangerously close to the kind of quasi mysticism that he criticises in the work of the young Lukacs: a mysticism that talks in terms of the hegelian 'moment' where the whole of society is transformed. The whole conception has a ring of the apocalytic about it. Although it is essential to recognise that there are crucial periods, events, confrontations, etc., it would be wrong to think of these as total in character. The marxist view of dialectical development stresses continuity as well as discontinuity. However, within the revolutionary process as a whole, one can single out what Lenin referred to as the 'revolutionary period' or what is often known as the revolutionary transition. During this time decisive changes are made: the transfer of political power, the change of ownership of the means of production and distribution and exchange: the establishment of a socialist state. This period may be relatively short—or last many years; there is no formula which determines its duration. That is decided by the relative balance of class forces.

THE MODE OF STRUGGLE

Among anarchists and certain types of ultra-left marxists, acceptance of the false theory of a totality is also associated with an emphasis on the need to employ physical force in order to gain the revolution. Indeed, sometimes one has the feeling that if a revolution was made without resort to insurrection and civil war, then for them it would be no revolution. That is because they have the view that the use of physical force is somehow purifying and morally necessary; it signifies war to the death and the complete destruction of the enemy as well as utter commitment to the revolutionary cause on the part of those willing to use it. Here again, we are faced with utopian romanticism and not politics.

There are others who do not go so far as to argue that physical force is desirable in itself, but they insist that it is undoubtedly necessary to achieve revolutionary change. Very often those who adopt such a position think that the only *real* force available in the revolutionary struggle is physical force. However, it was Engels who pointed out the tremendous power of the organised working class in Britain (and it would be true of any similarly well organised labour movement). That power rests upon economic, political and social strength and not upon access to physical force. One of the things that distinguished marxist theory from earlier utopian theories was that Marx and Engels insisted that mass production gave the

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workers opportunities to organise and to employ their *economic* strength against the employers. Engels himself argued that the winning of the universal franchise could, if it were used correctly, vastly increase the political power of the working people, and create conditions, especially in Britain, where we might achieve a revolution without recourse to insurrection. Indeed, he pointed out the dangers of suggesting that all that was needed was to 'arm the workers'; he emphasised the fact of the high standard of organisation and equipment of modern armies and that taking to the barricades was, very often of more moral than military value.

The most important thing was to use political and economic strength to create a situation in which the ruling class found it well nigh impossible to succeed in crushing the opposition through military methods. Of course, Engels was not ruling out the possibility of violent revolution, armed insurrection and civil war: what he was arguing was that they were not necessary in all cases. Each revolutionary movement must decide for itself what are the most appropriate methods to adopt in order to achieve socialism. However, in highly industrialised countries it seems highly unlikely that revolution will be brought about by a resort to civil war and it is significant that none of the Communist parties in those countries anticipates that within their programme.

National Liberation

The fact that different conditions exist in different societies not only means that correspondingly different tactics have to be employed in the furtherance of revolutionary goals, but that the whole *mode* of the struggle to establish socialism is markedly different as is the pattern of socialist development.

For a people who are busy waging a war of national liberation that struggle is not a *means* in the battle to achieve a socialist society; it is something that determines *how* that is to be won and that has a decisive effect on future plans and priorities. The national liberation struggle is linked with every aspect of social, economic and political life; it creates new alliances, organisations and forms of administration; it mobilises the masses of the people and brings them into political life; it gives birth to new ideas and values and fosters a new dignity and national purpose.

All these changes necessarily alter the way in which socialism is understood, fought for and practised; indeed, in some societies, it would be inconceivable to imagine the rise of socialist consciousness without this kind of development. Those organisations which have been crucial in achieving national liberation are those that are also crucial in the building of socialism. We could take as an example the role that people's armies play; the significance of the role of the army in China in creating new forms of local administration; the task of socialist construction undertaken by the army in Mozambique.

In Advanced Industrial Countries

But the concept of the 'mode of struggle' does not just apply to the conditions of a national liberation movement, it applies to all types of revolutionary process. Movements in advanced industrial societies where there is an established bourgeois democracy face many common problems and do have to a large extent a common mode of struggle. They share the strategic problems of how to deal with state monopoly capitalism, where the economy is dominated by home-based as well as foreign multinationals and capitalism is maintained, not by repression mainly, but by a consensus based upon ruling class control over the mass media and other important social institutions. It is no accident that the revolutionary movements in all of these countries have developed strategies based on the building of a broad democratic alliance against the multinationals having as its core the organisations of the working class. The mode of struggle of those fighting fascist or ultra-right governments in conditions of illegality and in the absence of many of the rights of bourgeois democracy is modified accordingly.

Of course, a movement may pass from one mode of struggle to another. The slow transition in Spain, from fascism to bourgeois democracy, is changing the mode of struggle there and the

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Spanish Communist Party's programme is now, in many ways, similar to that of other advanced capitalist societies. But although the mode of struggle may change, the previous experience does not simply pass into the mists of history, ignored and forgotten. No, it continues to mould the movement. And the mode of struggle during the revolutionary transition is especially significant for the development of the future socialist society. That can have its disadvantages as well as its advantages. It might be argued that the particular mode of struggle of the Russian revolution helped prepare the ground for the evil spread of Stalinism. But whatever its advantages or disadvantages a mode of struggle is not chosen, like a set of tactics may be: it is determined by the existing material conditions.

The Question of Stages

Although we talk of different stages corresponding, in part, to changes in the mode of struggle, that does not mean that these stages are separate and distinct. For example, the struggle to form a broad democratic alliance in Britain is not simply a stage that the British movement will go through; the gains that are won and the expectations that are formed will remain to structure the life of the British people under socialism. Those countries where there has been a struggle for national liberation find that the search for national identity and purpose continues after the establishment of socialism. Those movements which have been formed out of an alliance of workers and peasants have to take into account the desires, aspirations and concerns of their peasantry, and this means that for them socialist construction may take very different forms from societies where there is no peasantry, such as Britain.

World Relation of Forces

The material conditions which determine the mode of struggle are not simply those existing within a given country; the international situation can be very important. The shifting balance of world forces since the Russian Revolution means that it is now easier for countries to achieve national liberation and establish socialism. As the grip of neocolonialism is loosened, so it becomes much more difficult for reactionary forces, both within and outside of a country, to place obstacles in the path of that country's development. That is not to say that this does not still happen to a considerable extent; the experience of the countries of Latin America, for example, shows the hold that the imperialism of the United States has there. It expresses itself in many ways, ranging from military intervention to economic sabotage. Even advanced capitalist countries are at the mercy to a considerable degree of the international pressures to operate certain types of policy and pursue given patterns of development.

Any country in Western Europe which was advancing closely towards socialism would find itself facing the most severe economic pressures. Therefore it is essential that there is co-ordination between the various parties in different countries to minimise the effect of this kind of attack. That does not mean, of course, that countries in a stage of advanced capitalism must all have identical strategies and programmes: that would be a nonsense. But the maximum international co-operation is demanded between themselves, on the one hand, and also between the socialist countries and those who are seeking to establish socialism. That kind of co-operation demands the constant exchange of information, assessments, analyses and the exploration of areas of common interest.

There has been a certain concern recently at the sharpening of polemic within the world communist movement; there have been reservations expressed by some theorists in the socialist countries about the strategy of some of the parties in Western Europe, especially that of the Italians. Comrade Berlinguer made a very interesting comment on that at the Conference of European Communist Parties in West Berlin in 1976:

> "It is our opinion that respect for the principle of non-interference cannot exclude freedom of judgment on theoretical or political positions taken by other parties, as well as on particular events in international life and in the workers' movement. Everyone knows, for example, that while we have always stressed the great advances made by the socialist countries, we Italian Communists have more than once expressed critical judgments both on certain events and situations (for example, for Czechoslovakia) and on more general problems relative to the relationship between democracy and socialism in various socialist countries.
>
> "On their side, comrades in other Communist and Workers' Parties have, in speeches or articles, explicitly or indirectly, expressed critical positions with respect to orientations and convictions of ours concerning important aspects of our vision of socialism, as, for example, the question of pluralism. While we do not agree with these critical judgments, we consider that it is legitimate for them to be expressed. Indeed, it is our hope here that on these big issues the debate in the workers' movement will develop, yes, in a spirit of friendship and understanding, but also in the freest and frankest manner."

The growth of discussion around the central questions of strategy faced by the revolutionary movement in different parts of the world will be very helpful in the strengthening of marxist theory and political analysis and in the adoption of correct methods of work and political practice.

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Documents on Problems of Power:

Scientific Socialism and the Question of Dictatorship

Tetsuzo Fuwa

(We print below extensive extracts from the article by Tetsuzo Fuwa, Chief of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan. The article, about 30,000 words long, was published in Akahata *between April 27—May 8, 1976. The text is taken from the English translation printed in the Bulletin of the CC of the CPJ—*Information for Abroad*—with a few grammatical corrections. The quotations from Marx, Engels and Lenin have, where possible, been taken from English editions of their works and are given with references. The headings of the nine sections are from the original article; the sub-heads within these sections are ours.)*

I—HERITAGE OF THE TEACHINGS OF MARX AND ENGELS

In this section, Comrade Fuwa argues against the tendency which he finds exemplified in the writings of Stalin, to minimise the importance of the theoretical contribution of Marx and Engels in favour of that of Lenin, especially in connection with the theory of the State and revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

He writes:

"If one studies the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin today, nearly one hundred years after the deaths of Marx and Engels and over fifty years after the death of Lenin, on historical development, one is bound to notice that the theories of scientific socialism have not proceeded in a simple, orderly development from Marx and Engels through to Lenin and that, in a series of questions, the analysis made by Marx and Engels have a more up-to-date content than those made by Lenin. Furthermore, in quite a number of cases, some propositions advanced by Lenin which Stalin evaluated as advancing and developing Marxism and bringing it up-to-date, were actually the reflections of Russian experience in the Russian Revolution and of the special situation in Europe after World War I, and, although these propositions were valid and positive at the time, they have lost their applicability today, for the situation has changed."

"It should be particularly noted that in order to develop the theory of scientific socialism, to bring it up-to-date so that it can guide the revolutionary movements in the highly developed capitalist countries, the more thorough and overall study of the theories of Marx and Engels is of especial importance."

The Original Standpoint of Scientific Socialism

Comrade Fuwa gives the following reasons in support of the above ideas:

"First, such studies . . . are important for clarifying what was the meaning and content of each of the different propositions and concepts at the time they were initially introduced into the theory. Since the revolutionary theory of scientific socialism was impaired by erroneous and dogmatic formulations in Stalin's time, it is an indispensable, basic theoretical task for its creative development today, to turn back to the (so to speak) original point of scientific socialism and to grasp how these concepts and propositions were formulated in the course of confrontations and struggles with non-marxist groups and movements."

"Secondly, when Marx and Engels developed the theory of scientific socialism their starting point and basis was, above all, the study of the real situation in the politics, economy and society in the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe. Indeed, *Capital*, Marx's main work, was 'the result of a lifelong study of the economic history and condition of England' (Engels); and the main arena on which Marx developed his theory of class struggles and revolution was France, next in capitalist development to England, a country where class struggles were developing in the most advanced form."

"Moreover, although their activities were limited to the nineteenth century, Marx and Engels studied the problems of revolutionary movements in the various countries and periods of development of the capitalist world. They advised revolutionaries and workers by correspondence in more than a dozen different countries including Germany, France, England, the United States, Russia, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Poland, Austria, Hungary and Romania; and in their reviews and articles they studied the history and/or the situation in Turkey, India, China and other Asian, Middle Eastern and North African countries. In addition, the revolutionary theoretical activities of Marx and Engels continued from the 1840s to the 1890s, i.e. a full half of the 19th century, embracing the most varied political and

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economic questions. They were never satisfied with a superficial study of the problems of any country on which they were going to work. For instance, in order to analyse the Spanish Revolution of 1854 they made an exhaustive study of the political history of Spain from the 15th century onwards."

Lenin's Preoccupation

Comrade Fuwa then contrasts this with Lenin's main political preoccupation and the difference between Lenin's time and that of Marx and Engels.

"This was in contrast to the fact that the main arena for Lenin's activities was Russia, where capitalist development was backward. Lenin was an exile in Western Europe for a long period and expressed views about the situation there from early on, but the period when he was directly engaged in the revolutionary movements of Western Europe as a leader of the Comintern, was limited to five years—from 1919 to 1923 after the October Revolution, a period when Europe was in the throes of a special revolutionary crisis as a result of World War I."

"Thirdly, since Marx and Engels worked at a time when socialist revolutions and the building of socialism were not on the order of the day, both of them were most strongly opposed to any kind of formalism and dogmatism which sought to squeeze a development of a revolutionary movement into one or another particular formula or pattern, or to regard the experience of a revolutionary movement in a particular historical period of a particular country as a permanent model; and they defended the developing and creative nature of scientific socialist theory most strongly in the light of their own theoretical and practical experiences."

Changing Conditions

"It should be noted that this was one of the approaches which Engels in his later years always sought to teach to younger socialist activists. To take a specific example, when Conrad Schmidt, a young German theoretician, attempted to develop a general theory of 'a transitional stage to a Communist society', Engels described it as the 'most difficult matter' possible and advised him to postpone work on it indefinitely 'because conditions keep changing. For example, every new trust changes them and the point of attack will be totally shifted every ten years'. (*Engels to Conrad Schmidt*, in Zurich, July 1st, 1891.)"

"For all these reasons in spite of the historical distance of a century between Marx's time and our own, it is profoundly important for us to study their theoretical heritage today."

"Of course, it goes without saying that it is alien to the real spirit of scientific socialism to regard their every word and phrase as Holy Writ, and to overlook the fact that they were written in historical circumstances far different from ours. And from all that I have said, a study tracing the theoretical development of Marx and Engels constitutes an important part of our theoretical task and is linked with a creative development of scientific socialism today."

"One of the subjects on which such a re-examination is particularly needed, is the theory of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat', a major subject of constant discussion in the international movement."

"Since the Programme of the Communist Party of Japan was adopted at its Eighth Congress in 1961 (more exactly since 1957 when the first draft of the programme was issued), our Party has used the term 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' as a synonym for 'working class power'. This is demonstrated by the fact that in our programme we write: '. . . the establishment of working class power, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat'."

II—NEW THOUGHT ON CONQUEST OF POWER BY THE WORKING CLASS

In this section, Comrade Fuwa traces the historical background to the development of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat by Marx and Engels and then by Lenin, quoting from many of the books and articles where it is discussed. In the light of this he stresses that the theory reflected differences in conditions in different countries at different times.

He writes:

"In the course of more than a century of historical development the theory and practice of scientific socialism have arisen and advanced all over the world in various ways, as a result of struggles in different conditions in the individual countries. The theory of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' being one of the important components of this theory has likewise had a history of development. It was deepened by Marx and Engels themselves, then by Lenin, their successor in this work whose contributions on the dictatorship of the proletariat and on 'the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', marked a stage in the development of his theory. This historical background of the theory has reflected the historical or national peculiarities in individual periods and countries. This is quite natural for the theory of scientific socialism which is a growing theory, and such reflection is characteristic of its constant development and advance".

III—THE TERM—'DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT' AND THE QUESTION OF THE PARTY PROGRAMME

This section discusses the views of Marx and Engels on Socialist Revolution and State power emphasising that these did not always include references to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It also includes a list of all their writings referring to the dictatorship of the proletariat which we reproduce.

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"Actually if one goes through all the *Collected Works*, theses, articles, letters and notes of Marx and Engels, one will find that they explained their views on state power in the period of Socialist Revolution and socialist construction in far fewer cases than generally expected by use of the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. As far as I have been able to check, they directly used the term in the following 12 documents including letters and notes:

> "*The Class Struggles in France* (1850) Marx-Engels *Selected Works* in two volumes, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, Vol. I, p. 128, referred to hereafter as MESW.
>
> *The World Society of Revolutionary Communists* (1850) (An Agreement of principles signed by Marx and Engels representing the Communist League and French Blanquist refugees in London and the revolutionary wing of the Chartists. Written by August Willich though signed by Marx and Engels).
>
> Marx and Engels *Declaration* (1850).
>
> Marx *Letter to Weydemeyer* (MESW, Vol. I, p. 410).
>
> Marx *Address at the Celebration of the Seventh Anniversary of the International Working Men's Association* (1871).
>
> Engels—*The Housing Question* (1873) (MESW, Vol. I, p. 505).
>
> Marx—*Political Indifferentism* (1873).
>
> Engels—*The Programme of the Blanquist Commune Refugees* (1874).
>
> Marx—*Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers Party* (Critique of the Gotha Programme, 1875), (MESW, Vol. II, p. 17).
>
> Engels—*Letter to Conrad Schmidt*, October 27th, 1890, (MESW, Vol. II, p. 445).
>
> Engels—*Introduction* to the 1891 Edition of *The Civil War in France* (1891) (MESW, Vol. I, p. 429).
>
> Engels—*Critique of the Draft Social Democratic Programme of 1891 (The Erfurt Programme).*"

"In all other documents, Marx and Engels used either 'working class power' or 'the political rule of the proletariat' instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and one or other of these terms was used in overwhelmingly more cases than the dictatorship of the proletariat. This does not mean that Marx and Engels discarded the concept of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' by any means or treated it as something of secondary importance. What it does reveal is that they used both terms as always having basically an identical meaning."

"This is well indicated by their attitude to the question of the programme of the working men's party."

IV—"DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" IS THE SEIZURE OF ALL POWER—FROM THE ANALYSIS OF THE 1848 REVOLUTION

In this section Comrade Fuwa outlines his views of the 'original and accurate meaning' given by Marx and Engels to the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, emphasising in this connection their analysis of the revolutions of 1848 in Germany and France.

"Originally the word 'dictatorship'—a Latin one etymologically—came from a political system in the republicanism of ancient Rome. It was a practice in republican Rome that a number of Consuls elected by the people held the reins of power in the country. When war broke out or a domestic crisis occurred, one of the Consuls, or someone appointed by the Consuls, was made the dictator, to whom special, all-embracing powers were temporarily given in order to meet the crisis. The term 'dictatorship' arose to indicate the function, term of office, and political activities of such a dictator. . . ."

"Marx and Engels gave a new, contemporary meaning to this Latin word . . . and began to use it as a concept in the theory of the State and that of revolution for scientific socialism."

Dictatorship and 1848-49 German Revolution

"In the articles in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* which appear in the Collected Works of Marx and Engels, it is stated that the first person to use the word 'dictatorship' in connection with the German Revolution, was Camphausen, the Prime Minister of the Prussian Government established after the revolution. In the Berlin Assembly he rejected the demand of the democratic group that he act on the basis of the revolution, stating that he did not want to reject the monarchic power of the *Ancien régime*, and that what was necessary was an agreement between the Crown and the people, and declared, 'The Government did not exercise dictatorship, it could not exercise it, it did not want to exercise it.' Marx and Engels sharply criticised Camphausen's theory of 'agreement' for denying the people's sovereignty and subordinating the people's sovereignty and subordinating the revolution to the *ancien régime* of monarchic sovereignty. They demanded that the Frankfurt National Assembly should not accept this position . . . but should, as a supreme, representative Assembly, representing the sovereign will of the people, employ its sovereign power":

> "If there is no government the National Assembly must govern. Its first move should have been a decree of seven words—'The Federal Diet is dissolved for ever'. A Constituent National Assembly must above all be an *active* revolutionary active Assembly. The Assembly at Frankfurt is engaged in parliamentary school exercises and leaves it to the government to act. . . .
>
> "It (the National Assembly) only had to oppose authoritatively all reactionary encroachments by obsolete governments in order to win such strength of public opinion as would make all bayonets and

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rifle butts ineffective against it."

(*The Programme of the Radical Democratic Party and of the Left at Frankfurt, June 1848* in Marx—Engels Collected Works, Vol. 7, p. 49, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London.)

". . . And when the monarchic power (the crown) which had regained its strength, adopted an offensive attitude towards the Berlin Assembly, and a clash between it and the royal power actually began, Marx wrote as follows:"

> "Every provisional political set-up following a revolution calls for a dictatorship and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we blamed Camphausen for not having immediately smashed up and removed the remains of the old institutions. While thus Herr Camphausen indulged in constitutional fancies, the defeated party strengthened its positions within the bureaucracy and in the army and occasionally even risked an open fight."
>
> (*The Crisis and the Counter Revolution, Sept.1848*, in *Collected Works* of Marx & Engels, Vol. 7, p. 431, Lawrence & Wishart, London.)

"The above shows that the term 'dictatorship' is connected with these experiences of the German Revolution . . . the experiences that National Assemblies were established as the representative assemblies of the people based on universal suffrage; that in spite of this, they devoted themselves to debates in enacting the Constitution and the like, but failed to function as the supreme instrument of power and was finally forcibly crushed by the old power, the monarchical power of Prussia. In using the term 'dictatorship', Marx and Engels stressed especially the need for the revolutionary classes not only to take hold of the legislature but also the executive government, and to keep the military forces under their control, so that they could control literally all state powers."

Dictatorship and the Struggles in France

"This concept of dictatorship was applied and developed further by Marx in his two works—*The Class Struggles in France*, and *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, in which he made an historical analysis of the 1848 revolution in France."

"Those who read these two works will notice that Marx originally used the concept of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' in order to express the imminent aim of the conquest of power by the working class and that, at the same time, he used the concept of 'dictatorship' in a more general form, as one of the categories of scientific socialism in relation to the state, or in other words, that for the purpose of defining the essence of the ruling force and state power in a particular period, he employed terms such as 'the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie' and the 'dictatorship' of a certain political force (the Republican dictatorship, the dictatorship of the Party of Order, etc.). An analysis of Marx's usage of these words in the works mentioned will provide us with another important clue for understanding the meaning of the concept 'dictatorship' for Marx."

"The conclusion is that he used the term 'dictatorship' in these works in the same way as he did in his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* articles, namely, to mean the complete seizure of power by certain classes and political forces. The *Neues Rheinische Zeitung* articles demanded a 'dictatorship' mainly in connection with a temporary order in a period of revolution, but in the above two works, this term is used in a broader sense, linking it with a longer historical period, as has been stated above. (*In the case of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it covers the whole period of transition to the stage where class distinctions and the state have disappeared, Fuwa*). . . ."

"A Republic was declared in the February Revolution and a Provisional Government formed by all the parties which had participated in the Revolution. In May, the Constituent Assembly was elected in which the bourgeois republicans had the majority and they elected the Executive Commission to replace the Provisional Government."

"The working men rose in the 'June Insurrection' but were crushed by troops led by General Cavaignec. . . . The period after the June insurrection was crushed, was characterised as 'the dictatorship of the bourgeois republicans' by Marx."

> "Louis Bonapart's election as President . . . put an end to the dictatorship of Cavaignac and to the Constituent Assembly." (Marx: *Class Struggles in France*.)

"The above historical review leads to the conclusion that by the term 'dictatorship', Marx (i) pointed out the class nature of a state power, namely, which class or union of classes was in possession of state power and, at the same time (ii) indicated that the particular class was in possession not only of some parts of the state machine, but literally all state power."

"This expresses the same view as we do today when we use the term 'power'."

Different Forms of Bourgeois Dictatorship

"In addition, one of the important conclusions from Marx's historical analysis of French political history is that a 'dictatorship' by a particular class or political force does not exclude institutions of political democracy, such as universal suffrage and republicanism, but can be realised under various state forms including republicanism."

"Both the dictatorship of the bourgeois republicans and the parliamentary dictatorships of the

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Party of Order—were dictatorships created under republicanism and backed by support of the majority of the people expressed through the medium of universal suffrage. However, when the majority of the people began to oppose the bourgeois domination, and the democratic political institutions of democracy themselves became a threat to the bourgeois dictatorship, then the ruling class sought ways of maintaining its domination by turning to reaction and curbing the democratic institutions, as it does today. In 1850, when the Cabinet of the Party of Order was endangered by its defeat in an election, it dealt with the crisis by taking the reactionary step of abolishing universal suffrage. It replaced the republican form of bourgeois dictatorship by the anti-democratic form of bourgeois dictatorship."

"Marx pointed out that a bourgeois dictatorship can come into being under a democratic state form, under the sovereignty of the people (i.e. by the will of the people) as well as under a reactionary state form where the sovereignty of the people is eliminated (i.e. against the people's will), and this indicated most clearly that the concept of 'dictatorship' in scientific socialism is not related to any particular state form and that the concept indicates the class nature of the state power. The vulgar theories of 'dictatorship' which link it with a special form of state power—denial of universal suffrage and parliamentary politics or with dictatorial and/or despotic politics—have nothing to do with the original terminology of Marxism."

V—REVOLUTION BY PEACEFUL MEANS AND THE QUESTION OF DICTATORSHIP

This section discusses the views of Marx and Engels on the method of revolution and its relation to the dictatorship of the proletariat; an alliance with other sections of the working people led by the proletariat, and the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this section the importance of universal suffrage is discussed with particular reference to Great Britain and the United States.

Comrade Fuwa writes:

". . . As Marx and Engels outline in great detail in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, generally speaking it is theoretically impossible under a system of despotic rule (under the *ancien régime*) to effect a transition to a democratic, sovereign people's power by use of lawful means. Consequently the question of how to bring about a fundamental conversion from a system headed by a king or other monarch as sovereign, to one of the sovereign power of the people. The new democratic institution has to have the people's sovereign power as its source and to emerge from it. A revolution in this case, therefore, will be inevitably characterised by a breach with the institutions and laws existing under the old power. Notwithstanding this, even under a system of virtually complete bourgeois rule, so long as democratic institutions exist under the people's sovereign power, one can at least envisage a possibility of being able to effect a lawful transition to a new system on the basis of the majority of the people and by use of a parliament and legal means under the old system. This was the perspective held out by Marx for Britain and the United States."

VI—'POWER OF THE WORKING CLASS' AND CLASSES

In this section Comrade Fuwa examines the relationship of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' or 'power of the working class' to different classes in society.

Question of Allies

Marx and Engels, he says: "characterised the class nature of the power of the socialist state as the 'power of the working class', but they never defined it as the power of the working class alone, without alliance with other classes of the people."

The only possible exception, Tatsuzo Fuwa continues, was Britain, as it was the only country where the peasants basically did not exist and where the workers formed the majority of the population. In countries like Germany and France, Marx and Engels envisaged an alliance of the working class with small peasants and the petty bourgeoisie:

"This policy of rallying the majority of the people by an alliance was not put forward as an expedient tactic, but was the basic line of the socialist revolution, an historical mission of the working class, accords in fact with the interests of the majority of the people. . . ."

The form of political power exercised by the Paris Commune, Fuwa writes, represented such an alliance:

"Marx and Engels naturally expected that a socialist power, established in this way, with the support of the majority of the people, would not be formed only by the working class and its representatives, but, in concrete form, be a power, relying on a coalition of the classes supporting the revolution. In fact the Paris Commune, evaluated by Marx and Engels as the first example of proletarian dictatorship, was not an organisation comprising workers alone, nor elected by workers alone. . . ."

Winning a Majority

Comrade Fuwa discusses next the question of majority rule. He quotes from Engels' Introduction *to the 1895 edition of* Class Struggles in France*:*

> "All revolutions up to the present day have resulted in the displacement of one definite class rule by another; all ruling classes up to now have been only minorities as against the ruled mass of the

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people. A ruling minority was thus overthrown; another minority seized the helm of state and remodelled the state apparatus in accordance with its own interests. This was on every occasion the minority group, able and called to rule by the degree of economic development, and just for that reason, and only for that reason, it happened that the ruled majority either participated in the revolution on the side of the former, or else passively acquiesced in it."

"But if we disregard the concrete content of each occasion, the common form of all these revolutions was that they were minority revolutions. Even where the majority took part, it did so—whether wittingly or not—only in the service of a minority; but because of this, or simply because of the passive, unresisting attitude of the majority, this minority acquired the appearance of being the representative of the whole people." (Karl Marx—*The Class Struggles in France*—Engels' 1895 *Introduction*, Martin Lawrence, London, p. 14).

Fuwa quotes further Engels' opinion that:

"The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for (with body and soul). The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair." (*Ibid.* p. 25).

Comrade Fuwa concludes:

"A socialist revolution aiming at 'a complete transformation of the social organisation' would be possible only when the majority of the people understood the purpose and tasks of the revolution, rallied to it consciously, and when, therefore, continuous activity amongst the broad masses of the people to win a majority becomes an important part of the fundamental preparation for revolution."

The Concept of Proletariat

Tatsuzo Fuwa turns to a study of "what range of the working people is covered by the concept of the 'proletariat' or 'working class', who are expected to play a leading role." Examining a number of texts from Marx and Engels, he concludes:

"The remarks of Marx and Engels, as reviewed above, have proved that they saw the working class, a class called the proletariat, as a highly growing one, growing because the range of its components was expanding with the increasing control of capitalist relationships over society. For them the distinction between mental and physical labour, which could have an important significance for other theoretical purposes, had no essential significance in defining a frontier between the working class and other social strata. The decisive criterion for them was whether or not a working man was caught in the relationship of capital—wage labour, whether or not he was a 'wage labourer' selling his labour power to capital at a wage determined by the cost of reproducing his labour power."

Forms of Power

Discussing the contents of two of Engels' letters—his Letter to Marx *of September 1870 and his* Letter to Bebel *of October 24, 1891, Fuwa writes:*

"I want to stress that when Engels considered the political forms of socialist transformation, he did not think that the exercise of force was a main or key matter, but desired that, in a revolution, conditions should have been prepared and have matured for its victory and success, so that the seizure of power and execution of political rule could be as peaceful and smooth (of course 'relatively') as possible. He regarded a phenomenon of the 'reign of terror' type as a most undesirable deviation. This clearly shows, too, the error of the view of seeing special and principled significance in rule by force and seeing the 'coercive crushing of resistance by force' as characteristic of 'proletarian dictatorship' or of the view that an infringement of a democratic order of the law is an inevitable product of the dictatorship."

VII—SOCIALIST STATE AND DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Comrade Fuwa turns to the study of the views of Marx and Engels on the political and state forms of the proletariat dictatorship:

"The conclusion is that Marx and Engels consistently claimed, from the outset of their activities as scientific socialists until the last moment of their revolutionary lives (in 1883 for Marx and 1895 for Engels) that a socialist state would inherit democratic republicanism, the finest fruit of the period of capitalism—a political system of people's sovereignty where a parliamentary assembly of the people based on universal suffrage would be the supreme organ of state—and that the socialist state would become a reality in the form of just such a democratic republic (though, of course, with certain essential modifications)."

Fuwa quotes a number of passages on this theme in the works of Marx and Engels. (*Marx*—The Cologne Newspaper on the Election, *February 1849; Engels*—Letter to Eduard Bernstein, *August 27, 1883; Engels*—Letter to E. Bernstein, *March 24, 1884; Engels'* Origin of the Family; *Engels'* Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891; *Engels'* Reply to Giovanni Bovio, *1892; Engels'* Letter to Paul Lafargue, *March 6, 1894*).

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He summarises the views of Engels in four points:

"(i) A democratic republic is the best democratic form of a capitalist state. Only in a democratic republic can the working class fight out to the end its struggles against the bourgeoisie, and achieve the conquest of political power."

"(ii) A democratic republic is the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the 'ready for use political form' which can be taken over from a capitalist society."

"(iii) For this reason, in a country not yet having this democratic form (Germany), a revolution has to start by winning such a democratic republic; and in a country which already has one (France), if the republic is destroyed or threatened by attack from the reactionary forces, struggles must be carried out for its defence and re-establishment."

"(iv) The democratic republic, however, is not in itself socialist, and its class nature depends on who holds power. In so far as the bourgeoisie holds power, the republic is hostile to socialism and the working class, and it should not be glorified as socialist."

Tetsuza Fuwa adds:

"From the experiences of the Paris Commune . . . Marx and Engels drew some important lessons on the question of modification of the state machinery. This was, however, a democratic modification within the basic framework of a democratic republic, and their basic standpoint that the democratic republic should be seen as the 'specific' and 'ready for use' form for the power of the working class remained unchanged."

Stalin's Errors

Comrade Fuwa continues with a critique of Stalin's "erroneous criticism" of Marx and Engels with respect to the democratic republic:

"There was a period, however, in the history of scientific socialism when the evaluation of Marx and Engels of the democratic republic became in a sense 'forgotten words'. It can be said that this was caused, in particular, by Stalin's erroneous criticism of Marx and Engels."

"The conclusion of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)—Short Course* (published in 1938 and authorised by the Central Committee of the CPSU, but, according to the *Short Biography of Stalin*, written by J. V. Stalin) includes the following":

> "Before the second Russian Revolution (February 1917), the Marxists of all countries assumed that the parliamentary democratic republic was the most suitable form of political organisation of society in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. It is true that in the seventies Marx stated that the most suitable form for the dictatorship of the proletariat was a political organisation of the type of the Paris Commune, and not the parliamentary republic. But, unfortunately, Marx did not develop this proposition any further in his writings and it was committed to oblivion. Moreover, Engels' authoritative statement in his criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Programme in 1891, namely, that 'the democratic republic . . . is . . . the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat,' left no doubt that the Marxists continued to regard the democratic republic as the political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat."
>
> "Engels' proposition later became a guiding principle for all Marxists including Lenin. However, the Russian Revolution of 1905, and especially the Revolution of February 1917, advanced a new form of political organisation of society—the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. As a result of the study of the experience of the two Russian revolutions, Lenin, on the basis of the theory of Marxism, arrived at the conclusion that the best political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat was not a parliamentary democratic republic, but a Republic of Soviets."

"This argument of Stalin contains a double or treble error."

Destruction or Reorganisation

"First, Marx and Engels did not 'forget' the conclusion they had drawn from the experiences of the Paris Commune. The most important proposition based on those experiences was the theory of state and revolution which stated that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purpose.' (Marx —*The Civil War in France*). This proposition was included in their introduction to the *Communist Manifesto*, when a new edition was issued."

"Later Engels also repeated this lesson in his *Letter to Van Platten* (April 18, 1883), in his *On the Death of Karl Marx* (May 1883), in his *Letter to E. Bernstein* (January 1, 1884), his *Introduction* to the 1888 English Edition of the *Communist Manifesto* (January 1888), his *Introduction* to the *Civil War in France* (March 1891), etc."

"His *Critique of the Draft Erfurt Programme* was written three months after the last of the above-listed writings, and no grounds can be found in the criticism contained therein that, as a lesson of the Paris Commune, his evaluation of the democratic republic has been 'committed to oblivion'."

"Secondly, it is not a correct understanding of Marx's position that the 'working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purpose', to consider that it means the destruction of a democratic republic and the creation of an entirely new form of state'. Engels, in his Letters mentioned above to Van Patten and Bernstein, called the state 'the only organisation which the victorious working class finds ready made for use', stressed the need for its 'reorganisation'

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and 'adaptation' and counterposed this policy to the anarchist standpoint of 'destroying' the existing state."

"As revealed here, the lessons which Marx and Engels drew from the Paris Commune was not the 'destruction' of the democratic republic, but its genuine democratic popular 'reorganisation'. And the guidelines for this 'reorganisation' were the policies developed by Marx in the *Civil War in France*":

"(1) discarding bureaucratic and military mechanism, independent of and suppressing the people."

"(2) superiority of the people's representative assembly over the executive power, combination of legislative and executive activity."

"(3) public servants working at workmen's wages; a system of right or recall of any public servant, etc."

"These policies of 'reorganisation' were in every way specific to meet the given political situation, and, of course, not of such a nature as to be 'dogmatised' as golden rules applicable throughout the ages. Moreover, we should bear in mind that Marx never tied such 'reorganisation' to a denial of or restriction of universal suffrage, but, on the contrary, linked it to a more complete use of the democratic functions of universal suffrage as in his *Civil War in France*":

> "Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business. . . . Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture." (*Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Civil War in France*, 1871, Section III.)

Soviets or Democratic Republic?

"Thirdly, we fully recognise that the state form of Soviet power was a creative product of the Russian Revolution, which inherited the lessons of the Paris Commune, and that this form of power of the Soviet type played a certain positive role in the revolutionary crisis in Europe immediately after World War I, as seen in the Workers' Councils (Räte) in Germany and the Soviets in Hungary."

"This is one thing. But it is quite another thing to claim that a soviet republic is 'the best possible form of the dictatorship of the proletariat' and to deny on principle any other political form. It should be noted, in fact, that the year 1938, when Stalin made this formulation, was in fact at a period when such schematicism had already been overcome in the practice of the international revolutionary movement."

"For in 1936, two years earlier, the People's Front won victories in elections in Spain and France respectively, and for the first time in the world, united front governments based on parliamentary majorities were established there; and this was followed by the Civil War in Spain, in the course of which a democratic republic of a new type, with power held by the people, was in the process of development."

"Thus Stalin's views, which at this moment of history disregarded the new realities and tried to squeeze the perspective of the world revolutionary movement into the formula of a Soviet Republic, were all the more harmful and outdated."

"For these reasons it is all the more important to get rid of this schematicism of Stalin and to revive the so-called 'forgotten words' of Marx and Engels about the democratic republic."

VIII—LENIN'S THEORY OF THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

This section is devoted to a detailed analysis of Lenin's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat and examines the way in which it developed from his conception of the 'revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', his slogan at the time of the 1905 revolution, to the views outlined in State and Revolution, *and finally his conception of proletarian dictatorship in the immediate first World War revolutionary crisis.*

Comrade Fuwa writes:

"When one reads Lenin's theories on the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' attention should be paid to the two elements existing in it: one is the part where the basic view of Marx and Engels has inherited and developed, a view having universal value for scientific socialism. The other is the part which comprises propositions newly added by Lenin to the views of Marx and Engels, but these were actually reflections on the specific process of development for the Russian Revolution and of the special historical conditions of the European situation at that time which have no universal and principled significance, and are no longer applicable to current conditions."

Developing Marx and Engels

"*The State and Revolution* (1917), written by Lenin on the eve of the October Revolution, includes a famous passage quoted below. It is obvious that in this passage, Lenin used the term 'dictatorship' in line with the original terminology of Marx and Engels . . . namely, in the sense of a class description (characteristic) of a state power, irrespective of the forms of the state."

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> "Bourgeois states are most varied in form, but their essence is the same: all these states, whatever their form, in the final analysis are inevitably *the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. The transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same, *the dictatorship of the proletariat*." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 413, Lawrence & Wishart, London.)

"Lenin also attached importance to admitting national variations of the proletarian dictatorship, considering this as a question related to scientific socialism. During World War I, when Lenin was in exile in Switzerland, he wrote "*A Caricature of Marxism—Imperialist Economism (1916)*, a passage in which strongly precluded uniform modelling of socialist power. This is very important for those of us today who are seeking a new line for socialism in highly developed capitalist countries":

> "Even the trusts and banks of modern imperialism, though inevitable everywhere as a part of developed capitalism, differ in their concrete aspects from country to country. There is a still greater difference, despite homogeneity in essentials, between political forms in the advanced imperialist countries—America, England, France, Germany."
>
> "The same variety will manifest itself also in the path mankind will follow from the imperialism of today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow. All nations will arrive at socialism . . . this is inevitable, but all will not do so in exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rates of socialist transformation in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint 'in the name of historical materialism' *this* aspect of the future in a monotonous grey." (*Collected Works, Vol. 23*, pp. 69-70.)

"Furthermore, Lenin repeatedly pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which is essentially characterised by the alliance of the working class with the peasantry and other classes of the people and that the working class plays the leading role in this alliance, as can be seen by the following":

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working class, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty-bougeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these strata, an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is the complete overthrow of capital, complete suppression of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie as well as of attempts at restoration on its part, an alliance for the establishment and consolidation of socialism." (*Foreword* to the Published Speech—Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality" (1919) *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 381.)
>
> "If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term 'dictatorship of the proletariat' into simpler language it means just the following:
>
> "Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers, and the factory industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capitalism, in actually carrying it out; in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes." (*A Great Beginning*, 1919, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 420.)

Specific Features of Russian Revolution

"Notwithstanding this, Lenin's theory of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' has the other element, that which reflected the specific features of the Russian Revolution. For instance, unlike the proposition advanced in *State and Revolution* to the effect that dictatorship is a concept indicating the class characteristics of power irrespective of state forms, he also advanced the view that 'dictatorship' is a concept which is related overwhelmingly to state forms, as, for example":

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a scientific term indicating the class which plays the leading role in it and the special form of state power called dictatorship, i.e. power based not on law or elections, but directly on the armed force of a particular section of the population." (*An Epidemic of Credulity*, 1917, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 65.)

"This definition of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat was, in fact, elaborated in the first Russian Revolution of 1905-07 in connection with Lenin's studies aimed at working out a theoretical basis for the struggle to overthrow Czarist despotism and establish a Provisional Revolutionary Government by armed insurrection. From the initial period of the outbreak of this revolution Lenin advanced the slogan of a Provisional Revolutionary Government as what should be the aim of the revolutionary movement. He began to formulate the goal of the revolution by using the term 'revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry' for the first time in his article *New Tasks and New Forces* (March 1905), *Social Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government* (March-April 1905), and *The Revolutionary Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry* (April 1905). This last article stated that, as for the relations between 'the Provisional Revolutionary Government' and 'the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', these concepts

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stand to each other roughly in the relation of legal form to class content."

"The policy of Lenin and the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) was that in order to carry out a democratic revolution in Russia and replace the state form of Czarist despotism with that of a democratic republic under a people's sovereign power, it would be necessary to use all means to convene a Constituent Assembly, and that such a Constituent Assembly could not be genuinely popular and genuinely sovereign enough to establish a Constitution unless the Czarist despotism was first overthrown and power won by the Provisional Revolutionary Government in order to guarantee the freedom of the people. . . ."

"In reply to all kinds of opportunistic trends wishing to avoid the task of establishing a people's power, Lenin made it absolutely clear that a genuinely sovereign Constituent Assembly could not be convened without overthrowing Czarist despotism and that a people's power to bring this about could not be established in a peaceful and legal way under this despotism and could only be achieved by an armed insurrection, thus outlining a correct line of development to the revolutionary movement."

Lenin, The Comintern and the Concept of Dictatorship

"This issue was taken up in his famous *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* (June-July 1905) in which Lenin dealt with the future prospects of the Russian Revolution while referring to the articles in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, written 67 years earlier. According to him, the final victory of the revolution would result, primarily in a 'dictatorship', for the following two reasons: (1) Such a victory must rely on military force, on the arming of the masses, on an insurrection, and not on institutions of one kind or another established in a 'lawful' or 'peaceful' way, and (2) it is necessary to break down the desperate resistance that will be undertaken after the realisation of the necessary changes, by the landlords and the big bourgeoisie. In another part of his article he used the following definition—dictatorship, i.e. suppression by force (*Collected Works*, Vol. 9). This view was elaborated more concisely in *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party* (March 1906) as follows":

> "Authority—unlimited—outside the law and based on force in the most direct sense of the word—is dictatorship." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10.)

and

> "The scientific term 'dictatorship' means nothing more nor less than authority untrammeled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force. "(*Ibid.*)

"It is important to note that in the period of the establishment of the Comintern after World War I, Lenin repeatedly enunciated this definition of the concept of 'dictatorship' as 'power directly based on force' as a general formula of the Marxist theory of the state (see *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, 1918, and *A Contribution to the History of the Question of the Dictatorship—A Note*, 1920) and made it an indispensable prerequisite for the Communist movement to accept the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in this sense. Lenin, at the Second Congress of the Comintern, when outlining the conditions of membership of the Communist International made not only the conquest of political power, but acceptance of the proletarian dictatorship a condition."

"Inheriting this standpoint of Lenin's, Stalin in his *Foundations of Leninism*, repeated Lenin's formula 'a power unrestricted by laws and based on force' and stated that power 'arises in the process of violent revolution'. Thus Lenin explicitly linked the concept of proletarian dictatorship more and more with that of forcible revolution, a specific method of revolutions, as for example in the following":

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat arises not on the basis of the bourgeois order, but in the process of the breaking up of this order, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in the process of the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists, in the process of the socialisation of the principal instruments and means of production, in the process of *violent proletarian revolution*. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a revolutionary power based on the use of force against the bourgeoisie." (Emphasis—T. Fuwa.)

"This formula, which reflected the process and features of the forcible revolution, is not applicable to the people's power or a revolution accomplished in a peaceful or lawful way; and therefore the proposition 'a power won not by laws or elections but directly based upon force' does not represent an indispensable essential characteristic of the concept of 'dictatorship'. This is also evident from the process of history since."

Lenin on the Soviets

"Studies of the peculiarities of the Russian Revolution also involve the question of the evaluation of the Soviet form as the political form of the proletarian dictatorship. When the Soviets were created in the course of the Russian Revolution, Lenin evaluated them highly as a new form of revolutionary power, but he adopted a very cautious attitude to its international generalisation. After the Soviet Revolution was won in October 1917, Lenin still declared that the Soviet was 'the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship' for some while, and also mentioned 'its (dictatorship's) peculiar, national

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form, the Soviets'. (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Oct.-Nov. 1918, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28)."

"After the German revolution in November 1918 where Räte (Councils), Soviet-type organisations were formed in enterprises, camps and warships to become core organisations of the revolution, Lenin began to talk about the international significance of a Soviet-type republic, and it was even recognised as a unified goal of the international communist movement at the first Congress of the Comintern in March 1919. We have outlined how this was formulated by Stalin in a more extreme form. History revealed, however, that the institution of the Soviet was only one of the various forms, the Russian form, of the proletarian dictatorship. Also, we cannot ignore the fact that in the course of more than half a century, many points which were regarded by Lenin as the essential characteristics of the form of Soviets, have been modified or lost."

Evaluation of Lenin's Concept

"So, some of the propositions set forth by Lenin in his theory of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' had objective grounds in the revolutionary movement of his day, and played a positive role as guiding propositions in leading the struggles of the working class and people to victory. But, in the later developments of history, they have been proved to be not generally applicable, and that they were special propositions reflecting the specific conditions of the Russian Revolution and of the West European situation of the day. For this reason, it is a gross error to consider the theory of Lenin on the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as the 'perfection' of that of Marx and Engels, or to determine it as a guideline for revolutionary movements effective for every country in all times."

"Of course it is not correct to consider that the propositions of Lenin that reflected the special development process of the Russian Revolution are simply characteristic of Russia alone. After the Russian Revolution more than half a century ago, people's revolutions occurred in a series of countries in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, and in not a few cases where a democratic or socialist power of the people was established by a forcible revolution under fascist dictatorship, or under an imperialist domination, the proposition of Lenin which stressed legal disruption between the old forces and new regimes were useful in characterising the people's power. Also, when we look at the current and future revolutionary movements, the Leninist theory of dictatorship can naturally be a real guideline for revolutionary movements in those countries where people encounter a Russian-revolution type situation—a situation which is common with the Russian Revolution in some material points related to the course of the revolution."

"In a country like Japan, however, a highly developed capitalist country with a political institution of parliamentary democracy—i.e. a country provided with conditions which make possible a revolution by peaceful and lawful means, and aiming at such a revolution, such a theory of 'dictatorship' has no objective basis and consequently cannot be effective for a revolutionary movement in such a country."

"As stated in the Report of the Central Committee to the 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Japan, from the outset, it was none other than Lenin . . . who warned against any attempts to unjustifiably generalise specific experiences of revolution and socialist construction in Russia as a common model for socialism throughout the world'. From this point of view we adopted an analytical attitude towards the very theory of 'dictatorship' of Lenin, and declared that we would not adopt as effective for today those propositions added by Lenin, and particularly the definitions and propositions specific for the establishment of a people's power by way of forcible revolution, which were added under an historical situation entirely different from that of the current revolutionary movement in Japan, although their historical significance should be duly evaluated."

IX—IN THE PLACE OF CONCLUSION

"What have we seen from this historical analysis of the proletarian dictatorship?"

"Our conclusions can be summarised as follows":

"First, the significance of the fact that Marx and Engels put forward the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat as one of the main pillars of the theory of scientific socialism originally rested on their new conception that the transition to a communist society, without classes and without a state, required a socialist state power, and that only such a power would make possible the achievement of the 'socialisation of the means of production', the principal content of socialist transformation."

"Secondly, the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' for Marx and Engels was a term equivalent to 'the power of the working class'. In particular the 'dictatorship' means the conquest of all power, but is not tied to any concept based on forcible revolution or other specific methods or forms of revolution."

"Thirdly, the 'power of the working class' means first of all that it has the task of carrying through socialist transformation which is the historic mission of the working class. The working class will, of course, play a leading role in this, but the power will not be that of the working class alone, excluding its alliance with other classes of the people. On the

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contrary, an indispensable feature of this power is that it forms a coalition with broad strata of the people, including the peasants and working citizens, to represent and rely upon the majority of the population."

"And fourthly, while there will naturally be many varieties of working class power relative to different nations and different times, Marx and Engels considered that a democratic republic, having as its supreme organ a parliament based on universal suffrage would be the most favourable."

"We, of course, strictly preclude the dogmatic attitude which regards every word and phrase of Marx, Engels and Lenin as a golden rule. Nevertheless, we consider that the propositions stated above are a summary of the basic thoughts of scientific socialism, relating to the question of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'."

"Inheriting the basic thoughts of scientific socialism, the Communist Party of Japan has worked for a creative development of these ideas and theories, in the current situation of Japan and the world, so that a perspective of socialist future could be put before the Japanese people."

"The historical review given above of the theories of Marx and Engels on revolution and the state, has shown clearly that the perspective put forward by our party does not contradict the original standpoint of scientific socialism, but is in fact a contemporary and Japanese development of scientific socialist ideas in accord with the conditions of our present time."

The Japanese Revolution

"(1) The Programme of the Communist Party of Japan states that when, in Japan, a democratic revolution has been carried out by a consensus of the people and further progress has to be made to achieve a socialist revolution by a consensus of the people, it will be politically necessary to develop the existing democratic power into a socialist power, to bring about the 'establishment of working class power, namely the dictatorship of the proletariat'. Needless to say, this will not be a government or power of the workers alone with sole participation of the workers and their representatives."

"It will be a government established by a parliamentary majority won by the united front supporting socialism with the suffrage of all people guaranteed. In other words, it will be a power that can be established in a situation where the majority of the people support a socialist course, and it is self-evident that the working class, forming the great majority of the population, will play a leading role in view of its fitness for organised activity and its class position. Similarly, it is natural that this government will rely upon the alliance of the working class with the working peasants, working citizens, small businessmen, intellectuals, etc.—an alliance which includes the majority of the population—and that, representing such an alliance, it will have the character of the power of a class coalition, a power genuinely representing the nation and the people."

"It is particularly to be noted that in Japan the struggles of the people do not aim today, directly, at a socialist revolution. First, a broad united democratic front is to be formed, a national democratic alliance of the workers, peasantry, working citizens, intellectuals, women, youth, students, small businessmen and all those who love peace and their fatherland, who defend democracy, and this front will carry out a democratic revolution against imperialism and monopoly capitalism. In this way, then, progress will be made towards socialism, and the people's-coalition character of this power will become ever more clear and broad even in the stage of socialist revolution."

Implementation of Democracy

"Our party has made it clear that in a socialist Japan, too, the main characteristic of its political institutions will be the thorough implementation of democracy under the sovereign power of the people.

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Questions of Culture:

Marxism and Art History

John Tagg

(An earlier form of this paper was read to the specialist course in Art and Design at the eighth Communist University of London, 1976. The author is an art critic and historian who has taught at several London Art Schools and is presently Research Fellow in the School of Communication, Polytechnic of Central London.)

Introduction

A peculiar feature of the art and design course at the Communist University is that, unlike other courses, it does not offer its students the chance to do in other ways what they do for the rest of the year. There is no practical element. What it presents is, in fact, a subsidiary subject in art and design studies and this causes difficulties. The danger is that these will be exacerbated when I talk about the problems of the discipline which is that subsidiary subject.

Of all the sessions in the art and design course, this is one whose subject has an academic history. Though I do not use the word 'academic' in its derogatory sense, and though it would be against the spirit of what I have to say for me to apologise for my method of presentation, I have to begin by admitting that I have had some hesitation about reading this paper; for the reason I have outlined and one further. It is often argued that, whereas we ought not to make hasty judgments on historical materials we have hardly yet begun to study, we equally ought not to allow a (fashionable) concern with methods and preliminaries to keep us from an ever-renewed and renewing communion with the body and blood of 'real history'. Such invocations of the presence of 'real history', in its infinite variety, have caused me to ask myself whether my work does not continually fall short; unable to go beyond the point of making proposals for research, sketching the outlines of a scheme of study.

Yet this is to miss the point. What we have to come to grips with is not so much a matter of the boundaries of an area of study as of the coalescence of a set of problems, procedures, concepts and theories whose specific form determines the manner in which we discover and analyse our subject. It is the necessity of clarifying this problematic which persuades me to continue—with the hope of clarifying it not only in exposition but also in debate.

The Social History of Art

I need also to say at the outset that I have taken the critique of art historical method to be synonomous with the re-examination of certain problems of the social history of art which, along with others, I do not regard as one among a range of approaches, but as the only method offering access to the debates which were central to what have been called the 'heroic years' of art history. Though art historians of this turn-of-the-century period undoubtedly owed some degree of their pre-eminence to the central role of art in cultural history viewed as the History of Spirit and of aesthetic values in bourgeois ideology in general, this does not explain away the theoretical status of their writings. I remain convinced of the view that the social history of art is "the place where the questions have to be asked, and where they cannot be asked in the old way".[1]

The Marxist Approach to Art

However, I would go one stage further and state that this "asking in a new way" cannot begin without the most rigorous study of Marxist concepts. Hence my more exact title: the Marxist approach to art history.

I do not doubt this seems contentious; not only in its academic implications. Thirty years ago, Frederic Antal wrote that it was changes in economic and social history which had encouraged changes in the view of art, thus laying the basis for new methods of art history.[2] This was true, but these changes in economic and social history did

[1] T. J. Clark, "The Conditions of Artistic Creation", *Times Literary Supplement*, May 24, 1974, p. 562.

[2] F. Antal, "Remarks on the Method of Art History", *The Burlington Magazine*, Part I, Vol. 91, No. 551, February 1949, pp. 49-52; Part II, Vol. 91, No. 552, March 1949, pp. 73-75. Reprinted in *Classicism and Romanticism*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962.

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not spring from the ground like toadstools. It was not just a matter of changes in the historiography of economic and social structures, but ultimately of changes in those structures themselves. The social history of art would not be on the agenda today if there had not been changes in the objective social position of art historians and if at least some art historians had not become conscious of what was taking place. This much is clear, though it is little talked about. (Antal takes care to avoid it.) Yet the arguments for and against the social history of art are clearly understood, by protagonists on both sides, not only in their ultimate *political determination,* but also in their *political effectivity*. We would do well to think further, on both a personal and a theoretical level, about the historical effect of adopting one position or another, even within the rigour and objectivity of a system of thought.

I say this not to prepare the ground for a crude attack on the opponents of the social history of art, but in order to raise questions concerning changes within the social history of art itself, whose importance is both wide and great, establishing the more general ramifications of my theme.

Over the past years, the tendency within discussion at the Communist University, reflecting world-wide developments in Marxism, has been to seek to go beyond a deterministic and economistic interpretation of Marxism and press on towards a re-assessment in which those elements of social life which used to be referred to as 'superstructural' are seen in a more complex, dialectical relation with the economic process. This, I think, is a generalisation valid across the whole spectrum of specialist courses at the Communist University.

It is also clear that this development has definite consequences in the area of political theory and the strategy of political practice. The collapse of economistic theory must herald the end of the tendency to confine political work within a narrowly defined economic sector, relieved only by very generalised and moralistic responses to wider social questions. As Professor Giuseppi Vacca of the Executive Committee of the Italian Communist Party said in his address to a public session of the last Communist University, the way forward for Communist Parties lies in specific analyses of the concrete conditions of class struggle within particular countries, in the building of specific alliances on the basis of these analyses, and in greater emphasis on what can only very crudely be called the 'war of ideas'.

Without being too heavy-handed, I want to emphasise that I believe the assessment of art history for which I shall argue, not only corresponds to this view of the theoretical and political domains, but offers an area of research where critical models of the kind of analyses called for may be explored.

There are at least two dimensions of my subject which I shall leave largely undeveloped. I shall deal only implicitly with the question of whom art history as a practice serves or ought to serve; just as I shall only hint at the need for the true social history of art to bring within its purview more than that narrow band of visual production with which it has traditionally dealt. This is because I wished to give first emphasis to the search for a method.

However, what I have said so far should make it plain that I do not want to imply denial of the very important fact that, while changes in the methodology of art history may *seem* to arise only from the question of the adequacy of specific approaches, the very inadequacy of the existing method or methods only becomes socially *visible* through a change of allegiance on the part of the art historian. No more do I doubt that major reappraisals of method have, in the past, been bound up with changes or shifts of emphasis in subject matter: the re-evaluations by Riegl and Dvorák of what had hitherto been regarded as 'dark periods'—the periods of late antique and Mannerist arts—would be cases in point; or the re-examination of previously ignored areas of popular or ephemeral artistic production which followed from the attempt, by Warburg and others, to situate art history within an all-embracing history of ideas; or again, we might look at what Klingender did to bring a whole range of forgotten nineteenth-century materials within view. I shall refer again at the end of my paper to an area of production scarcely touched on by Marxist or other art critics, yet which promises much for the approach I shall try to describe.

I have two further points to make in this preamble. The first concerns one aspect of the paper which may no longer appear a virtue in this present context: that its account of the subject is brief, to the point of being skeletal. This is because it was prepared with a didactic intent and designed to leave time for discussion.

My second point is that, despite the separation of art history and art practice in which both art schools and academic art history departments are complicit, I do not hold with the view that my subject is of purely speculative interest and without practical consequences. It will, rather, be part of my argument that art history has not at all times been, and need not be, the peripheral subject it is in most art colleges. No more need it be bound to that genteel form of life which is perpetuated in most academic art history departments

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and which is embodied, for the public mind, in the poised and urbane figure of Lord Kenneth Clark, whose civilised display has given art history a new lease of life under the National Tourist Board.

To return to my subject which, I shall argue, *is* worthy of serious attention, I shall not attempt a survey of marxist writers or seek to lead you through a comprehensive bibliography. I shall attempt to make an argument and locate an area of contention which, in my view, represents the problematic of contemporary art history. My reading of the subject will, therefore, be partial and selective. Since this follows from my argument, it could not be otherwise.

Is There a Specifically Marxist Approach to Art History?

To begin with, I must identify my subject and make it clear that, when I speak of the problems of modern art history, I am referring to ways of analysing and writings about art in its historical dimension, not to the works of art or so-called movements which may or may not be the subjects of such analyses and writing. Neither the denunciation of the 'conceptual fallacy of modernism', if it may be so described, nor the enquiry into an alternative, 'radical' tradition of making art, must be confused with the question: is there a specifically Marxist approach to art history? And this latter, posed on a *methodological* plane, must itself be distinguished from the issue of whether there is a Marxist theory of art or a theory of art in Marx.

Put in this way, the question about art theory is a question about the content of Marx's writings. But if, following Lukács and others, we treat Marx's works not as a repository of answers but as the *realisation of a method*, then we shall be better placed to confront the problems of a Marxist art history and to judge whether such an approach has ever been, or could be, developed.

The History of Art History

Where we must begin is with the history of art history itself and, specifically, with the contribution to art historiography made by writers who have considered themselves Marxists. In pursuing this course, we will see the debate over method in its own historical context and come to see the history of art not only as a study of 'superstructural' elements, but as part of that metaphorical superstructure itself. As such, the domain of art history will reveal both its dependence and 'relative autonomy', and its history will have to be carefully disentangled from the histories of artists' theories and practices, even though the two are embedded in the same general socio-historical reality and even though they are constituents of the same falsely hypostasised mode of artistic production. I would in no way wish to underestimate the importance of the interactions between the histories—as when in the 1950s, for example, certain American artists came to feel compelled to find justification for their work by grounding it on Greenburg's dilution of Wölfflin's principles; or as when, in the 1920s and 30s, certain art historians were stimulated by the discoveries of Expressionism and Surrealism to reappraise that period of transition from Renaissance to Baroque art in Italy which came to be called 'Mannerist'.

Any adequate history of the subject will have to analyse fully such cross-fertilisations, but still see them as concerning two relatively distinct practices. And for the history of art history, relations with the histories of aesthetics, literary criticism, history, philosophy, psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, theology and, even, chemistry and physics, will be equally important. Art history certainly conceals at its centre many of the very assumptions which constitute the ideology *of* art (as opposed to the ideology *in* art), but, in a sense, at a certain depth of analysis all domains share this 'identity-in-difference'. It may be an important element within the ideologies of art and art history —a factor having repercussions on both the general theoretical level and the particular level of art education—that the separation between the two areas is complete. However, the application of historical materialism to their respective histories does not lead us into this trap. It, rather, shows the way to expose it.

But I am straying from my main theme which is to deal with the question of a Marxist methodology of art history through a historical critique of the subject. The task is immense and, covering the field, from whatever approach, there is only Udo Kulturmann's *Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte* that I know of.[3]

What I imagine an initial analysis might do is to attempt for art history something along the lines of Lukacs's analysis of philosophical theories of knowledge in "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat".[4]

Critique of Bourgeois Art History

What would this entail? In outline, firstly, a critique of the method of bourgeois art history in which, from the point of view of English art

[3] U. Kulturmann, *Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte*, Econ Verlag, Wien u, Dusseldorf, 1966.

[4] G. Lukacs, "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat" in *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, translated by R. Livingstone, Merlin Press, London, 1971, pp. 83-222.

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history, an important dichotomy would have to be observed between native trends and the very different evolution of continental art history from a starting point in classical German aesthetics and philosophy. In England, the approach to art has been dominated by a tradition of connoisseurship whose general effects have been of two kinds, both of them reflected in the history of the leading British academic art historical journal: *The Burlington Magazine*.[5] On the one hand, this tradition has fostered a species of 'sensitive', impressionistic and, despite the efforts of Ruskin and Morris, unhistorical mode of critical writing; a genre which, though gaining in control through the absorption of concepts from academic and scientific disciplines, survives intact into this century, providing a common point of reference for critics as diverse as Fry, Stokes and Berger.

On the other hand, connoisseurship has called into existence a certain narrow kind of rigour which has laid the basis for an art history ultra-empiricist in approach, whose mania for attribution issues forth in annotated and exhaustively documented catalogues of collections or single artists' works, as the ultimate accomplishment of the art historian. This development has not only been due to the influence of a certain national philosophical outlook but, more concretely, has been a response to the particular role played by the art historian in England: first as a cataloguer of private collections and, latterly, as a servant of the salesroom.

It is symptomatic of the state of the visual arts in Britain that its capital can provide the skills which make it the world centre for the auctioning of art, while the creation of art and its critical assessment have atrophied. The training of an art historian in Britain, the specific techniques (of dating, authentication, comparison) she or he is expected to acquire, could only be of use to 'experts' entering this service industry which is of no little importance to the national economy.

Since 1945, the development of theory within English art history, such as it has been, has been almost entirely due to emigré scholars from Europe; and, of course, only those with a particular ideological axe to grind were ever welcomed to Britain or wished to stay. But this only re-emphasises my further point that art history followed a very different course in Germany and Austria, on the basis of a very different assessment of the art historian's role.

There, within the universities and state-sponsored institutes, the art historian found himself at the very centre of the most important areas of debate in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The debates concerned the historical evolution of human consciousness and the determinants of human history, the character of national cultures and the existence of racial or epochal psychologies, the analysis of human products and the recovery of their meaning, the role of tradition and the nature of representation and style. The issues engaged all the historical sciences and the emerging discipline of sociology. Though it is hard to imagine it now, decisive attempts to resolve the problems came from art historians of the Berlin and Vienna School—Wölfflin, Riegl, Dilthey and Dvorák.

Behind this Germanic art history, whose potentiality revealed by contrast the narrowness of the English conception, lay the overwhelming influence of Hegelian philosophy. Here, the critical history of art history aimed at the definition of a Marxist methodology must enter all the complex passageways explored by the discussion of the relation of Marx's thought to that of Hegel. It is on the basis of Marx's critique of Hegel that one may begin to analyse the development of an art history of styles and movements, and the notion of the 'life of forms in art'. But it is also on the basis of a clearer understanding of the relation of Marx to Hegel that one may analyse the failings of the initial attempts at 'Marxist' art history.

If one was to look for a simplistic metaphor to picture a highly complex situation, one might say that the inversion of Hegelian concepts took place but, as Althusser has shown, *inversion* was not enough. The flaws of the Hegelian system were carried over into the re-centred 'Marxist' history. An epistemological break was not realised in art history and it is my contention that the failure to make the transition was not recognised until recently, when the problem took the form of a *methodological* departure; when, belatedly heeding Engels's warning, the materialist conception of history was taken as "above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction after the manner of the Hegelian".[6]

We are now in a position to deal with two areas which can in no way be omitted, even from a provisional discussion of our subject. Firstly, we are in a position to respond to criticisms of the Marxist approach which have come from bourgeois art theorists such as Gombrich and Wollheim; and, secondly, we can go on to discuss and assess

[5] For some remarks on the history of *The Burlington Magazine*, see my essay "Movements and Periodicals: The Magazines of Art", *Studio International*, Vol. 193, No. 983, Sept./Oct. 1976, pp. 136-44.

[6] F. Engels, Letter to Conrad Schmidt, London, August 5, 1890, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 393.

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the recent contributions of art historians like T. J. Clark.

Bourgeois Critics of the Social History of Art

It is of great importance, I think, to look carefully at the arguments mustered in Gombrich's lectures *In Search of a Cultural History* and his essay "The Social History of Art", and in Wollheim's "Sociological Explanations of the Arts: Some Distinctions".[7] The overt target of these writers is the social history of art. Covertly, they are attacking the Marxist treatment of art. Behind both approaches stands, I think, the work of the philosopher Karl Popper; in particular, Popper's petulant attack on Hegel and his exposure of historicism.

At this stage, I would want to disassociate myself from Popper's incomprehending and schematic dismissal of Hegel and point out certain weaknesses in his criticisms of holism which are a principal part of the armoury with which he makes his assault on historicism. Popper's view would suggest that there is no way for an historian or social scientist to study 'wholes' without either lapsing into triviality or falling into the historicist trap of subordinating all data to a single principle; attempting to show in every detail of a period or a society its essential spiritual, psychological or economic character.

However, the denial that a culture may be mapped out in its entirety as the effect of a unique cause does not imply the belief that any part of that culture may be understood in isolation. Nor does it commit us to Popper's 'methodological individualism'. Where Popper is in error is in assuming that there are only two broad concepts of the whole: either one adopts an atomist conception which views the whole as a sum of simple facts; or else one must hold the formalist notion which attributes to the whole a character independent of the parts and predominant over them. What Popper has no grasp of is the dialectical materialist concept of the whole as the structured interdependence of its relational parts as observed from any major part. Under this conception, since the ordering of elements and their relative importance varies according to the vantage point adopted, as many totalities (structured wholes) are admitted as there are starting points for analysis. The parts are bound into the whole in that identity-in-difference of which Popper's co-ordinates of thought do not allow him to conceive. As Bertel Ollman has written:

> "Though the dialectical and materialist whole can only be approached from its parts, the actual parts from which the whole is observed and receives its peculiar and complementary structurations are the result of decisions to break up the whole in just this way."[8]

To return to Gombrich and Wollheim, I do not have time for a detailed discussion of their respective cases, but it seems to me that, with due regard to the reservations expressed about Popper's critique of the notion of totality, one might, from the point of view of Marxist methodology, concede much of what they say and in no way imply that their ulterior ideological purpose is achieved.

Much of what has passed for 'Marxist' art history has perpetuated the structure of Hegel's historical analysis of art while merely exchanging the economy for the Spirit as the prime mover of the "Great Wheel of Culture". Much of the writing has fallen into the errors which make up Popper's one-sided representation of historicism and his cardboard image of Hegel. Naïve causal models of social determination and dubious theories of reflection have been used to 'explain' art, and the 'explanations' have been carried out at a rarified level of generality only befitting Universal History. Notions like the Spirit of the Age and ideas, such as that periods and nations can be treated as if they were of a piece and a single shape can be given to the whole of history, have survived; being merely dressed up in the clothing of economism.

The social history of art that has been offered has, frequently, not been a social history *of* art at all, but rather an attempt to construct a social history *from* art, as the reflection of 'broad social movements'. Or else, given a limited list of sociological adjectives—courtly, urban, conservative, liberal—and two sets of counterposed stylistic categories—fantastic or naturalistic, conservative or progressive, irrational or rational—such history has seen its purpose as, in Antal's words, "to dis-

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[7] E. H. Gombrich, *In Search of a Cultural History*, Oxford, 1969; and "The Social History of Art", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 35, March 1953, pp. 79-84; reprinted in *Meditations On A Hobby-Horse*, Phaidon, London, 1963, pp. 86-94.

R. Wollheim, "Sociological Explanations of the Arts: Some Distinctions", *Proceedings of the Third International Congress on Aesthetics*, Venice, 1965; reprinted in *The Sociology of Art and Literature: A Reader*, Albrecht, M. C., Barnett, J. H., and Griff, M. (eds.), Duckworth, London, 1970, pp. 574-81.

[8] B. Ollman, "In Defence of Internal Relations", *Radical Philosophy*, No. 13, Spring, 1976, p. 19. On the differences between the Hegelian and Marxist concept of 'totality', cf. also L. Althusser, *For Marx*, translated by B. Brewster, Penguin Books, 1969, p. 202 ff.

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cover which style belongs to which outlook on life".[9]

It is hardly surprising that the combinations generated by this approach—the *realist classicism* of the *rationalist upper middle class* of early fourteenth and early fifteenth-century Florence; the *romantic classicism* of the seventeenth-century *court aristocracy* in France, and the *rich financiers* who imitated them; as opposed to the *severe classicism* expressing the *progressive and earnest ideals* of the *civil servants and merchants* of seventeenth-century Paris and Lyon—have been ridiculed by Gombrich and others.[10] Here, undoubtedly, Hauser has been guilty; though his methodological work *Philosophy of Art History* suggests very different premises from those which he puts into practice in his historical studies.[11]

But having said all this, what we have done is not to discount the possibility of applying Marx's method to the problems of art history. In fact, the reverse is true. By more rigorously expunging idealist and historicist notions, the art historical materialist method may be more closely defined. We find that the very avenues which Gombrich and Wollheim have to agree may be left open to the social history of art, are those through which an art historical practice founded on the method of Marx would enter the subject.

The Marxist Methodology of Art History

We need not continue the discussion without examples. There is the relatively recent work of Tim Clark on art and the revolution of 1848 in France; and here, I cannot at all agree with Jack Lindsay that Clark's books do not alter issues of method. *Image of the People* opens with a chapter on the social history of art, but the whole work, like *The Absolute Bourgeois,* is the outcome of a method almost completely at odds with that of Hauser's *Social History of Art* or Fischer's *The Necessity of Art.*[12]

In his study of Courbet, what Clark does is to build up an exceptionally detailed picture of the circumstances of creation of a particular work: "The Burial at Ornans". By consulting all kinds of records, police files, letters, newspapers, novels and eye-witness accounts, Clark is able to follow a succession of routes to their point of convergence: a specific conjuncture—a concrete historical moment constituting the particular conditions for the creation of a particular work of art. Yet the particular conditions are themselves sited within a specific ideological field and informed by a general social crisis.

As Frederic Jameson has recently written:

> "The deliberate limitation to a few crucial years of Courbet's life and work underscores Clark's basic methodological premise here that great art—like revolution itself—is the result of a historical *conjuncture,* the function of a certain number of indispensable preconditions which can then, as in Courbet's later career, once more drift apart and thereby abolish the unique and fragile historical opportunity. In the case of Courbet, such an opportunity is the result of a meeting between an intellectual and a social class: but

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[9] Antal, *op. cit.,* p. 50.

According to Antal, the object of the social historian of art's revisionist task is to evolve "a new and overall pattern of stylistic developments". "Such a pattern will buttress and clarify the purely formal evolutions already established by pegging them to a basis wider than previously thought possible" (*op. cit.,* p. 52).

Thus, Antal's famous essay on Florentine painting was entirely conceived in terms of a history of styles before being translated into a 'sociological' account.

As for Klingender, while he warns against "the sociological relativists and other vulgarisers of Marxism" who "reduce the tasks of a 'Marxist' historian to a kind of crime detection which 'exposes' the class affiliations of all the great arists of the past" (F. D. Klingender, *Marxism and Modern Art: An Approach to Social Realism, Marxism Today* Series, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1943, p. 34); he also asserts that:

> ". . . as long as society is divided into classes, the history of art is the history of the ceaseless struggle and mutual interpenetration of . . . two traditions (Realism and Idealism). At successive, though widely overlapping phases corresponding to specific stages in the development of society, both these traditions, and also the results of their interplay, assume the historical *forms* which we call the 'Classical', 'Gothic', 'Baroque', etc., styles. A Marxist *history* of art should describe, first, the *struggle* which is *absolute* between these two opposite and mutually exclusive trends, and, secondly, their fleeting, conditional and *relative union,* as manifested in the different styles and in each work of art, and it should explain both these aspects of art in terms of the social processes which they reflect" (*op. cit.,* p. 48).

[10] All these examples come from a single page of Antal's "Remarks on the Method of Art History", *op. cit.,* p. 51.

[11] A. Hauser, *Philosophy of Art History,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1958.

[12] T. J. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois,* Thames & Hudson, London, 1973; and *Image of the People,* Thames & Hudson, London, 1973.

A. Hauser, *The Social History of Art,* four volumes, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1951.

E. Fischer, *The Necessity of Art: A Marxist Approach,* translated by A. Bostock, Penguin Books, 1963.

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that is only the most abstract and empty way of putting it. The most exciting feature of Clark's enterprise is the way in which, between this empty formula and some ultimate glimpse of the concrete, or of real history on all its complexity, one by one all of the intervening mediations are filled in."[13]

Clark himself tells us that he wants:

"to discover what concrete transactions are hidden behind the mechanical image of 'reflection', to know *how* 'background' becomes 'foreground'; instead of analogy between form and content, to discover the network of real, complex relations between the two. These mediations are themselves historically formed and historically altered; in the case of each artist, each work of art, they are historically specific."[14]

He also maintains that:

"the encounter with history and its specific determinations is made by the artist himself. The social history of art sets out to discover the general nature of the structures that he encounters willy-nilly; but it also wants to locate the specific conditions of one such meeting."[15]

Therefore:

"Our starting point is a certain moment of historical coalescence—a gesture, or a painting, which is supercharged with historical meaning, round which significance clusters."[16]

This is not an empiricist enterprise: it does not set us sliding down the slippery, unfenced slope of "the empiricism or the irrationality of 'that's how it is' and of 'chance' ".[17] The study of any one 'factor' in artistic production leads us very swiftly back to the general problems which we seemed to be avoiding: "The study of patronage and sales in the ninetenth century cannot even be conducted without some general theory—admitted or repressed—of the structure of capitalist economy."[18] To go even further, in certain circumstances, such as those Clark's study describes, we may encounter a work of art which is not only a historical *coalescence* but also a *condensation*, in which the containing structure of the complex whole seems to be confronted. At such moments, a work of art may dislocate and disrupt the very given and imposed structures within which alone it is intelligible. In mapping the complex of art's historical *determination*, we see the possibility of its historical *effectivity*.

From General to Particular

The passage from general to particular is revealed in Clarks' narrative; though I would not call the type of explanation 'anecdotal' since I consider that Wollheim introduces the term in order to trivialise the theoretical status of the approach.[19] No causal laws of artistic representation are posited. The analysis is painstaking and detailed. It does not take the form of highly generalised equations between artistic forms and social movements. It does not rely on a general theory of reflection. Indeed, such a theory cannot be stated for, applying what Engels wrote of state power, art may run in the same direction as the economic development, oppose the line of development, or prevent it from proceeding along certain lines.[20] In other words, the relation may be positive, negative, or somewhere in between. Thus, any general relational formula will be tautological. As Marx said, the relationship "can be ascertained only by analysis of the empirically given circumstances".[21] But "no one will ever arrive there by using as one's master key a general historico-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical".[22]

Not only Clark's subject, but also his method is a translation into art history of Marx's practice of historical materialism as we find it in *The Class Struggles in France 1848 to 1850* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* which, as Engels states, "deals almost exclusively with the *particular* part played by political struggles and events, of course within their *general* dependence upon economic conditions".[23] There are important revisions, however. The picture in Marx of a reactionary, pro-Bonapartist peasantry retreats before the evidence of a rural counterpart to the urban revolt of June 1848, in the bloody uprising of the

[13] F. Jameson, "Political Painting: New Perspectives on the Realism Controversy". *Praxis*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Winter, 1976, p. 226.

[14] Clark, *Image of the People*, p. 12.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[17] Althusser, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[18] Clark, *Image of the People*, p. 11.

[19] Wollheim, *op. cit.*

[20] F. Engels, *Letter to Conrad Schmidt*, London, October 27, 1890. *Selected Correspondence*, p. 399.

[21] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1958-9, p. 772.

[22] K. Marx, Letter to the Editors of *Notes on the Fatherland*, November 1877. *Selected Correspondence*, p. 294.

[23] F. Engels, *Letter to Conrad Schmidt*, London, October 27, 1890, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 402.

K. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850", *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp. 186-299; and "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 394-487.

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countryside in protest against Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of December 1851, at a time when the Parisian workers were no longer disposed to political action. The existence of such a rural revolutionary class becomes a crucial determinant in explaining the effectivity of Courbet's art in the years 1848 to 1852.

Clark builds up for us an analytical description of the specific nexus of conditions which are at once those under which the artist's consciousness is formed and his work created, and those within which his work has public meaning. We may call this nexus the *external relations* of the work. And here, we are locating a problem. Clark's analysis tends to stop at these *external* relations. It does not pass over to the analysis of the work of art's *internal relations.*

External and Internal Relations

In his review of *Image of the People,* Régis Debray acknowledges the methodological importance of Clark's work for the way it avoids both that impoverished art history which conceives itself as a strictly autonomous discipline, and that "naïvely deterministic sociology of art, which has the unfortunate propensity to liquidate its specific object by dissolving the work of art into the ideological sphere". He observes that:

> "The problem is how, each time, to find the *modus operandi* of the work of art, i.e. the internal rules of transformation of the real into the formal, the social into the figurative."[24]

But he also notes "with respect to the fundamental code of transcription of space that ruled (Courbet's) day" that: "It is perhaps on this point alone that a historian's approach falters".[25] The figuration of space, as I would prefer to term it, is only one instance in the analysis of the work of art's immanent features—one aspect of what I have called the 'internal relations' whose order, purpose and function the social historian must both see and make visible.

The division between internal and external is not, I must add, clearly drawn. For example, what Clark has to say touches on the choice of one mode of representation as opposed to another and illuminates the nuances of meaning in certain iconographical features; nuances which are specific to the historical moment and are lost to later spectators. No dialectical view could be happy with the complete separation of external and internal; this would be mechanical and dangerous. But the use of the two terms does isolate an area of difficulty which reopens and reformulates the apparently superceded argument over base and superstructure in Marxist philosophy. The problem is presented in its most acute form within art history: is the determinant action of the economic 'base' confined to the *preconditions* of consciousness and creation, to *external relations*; or does it pass into their internal structure?

Max Raphael

The consideration of another contribution to the Marxist literature on art will help us think about the problem. To the example of Clark's work, we may add that of the neglected German-born critic and art historian, Max Raphael, whose approach to art shared with Clark's a refusal to engage in epochal generalisations and even, until his later years, far-ranging sequential histories. What Raphael came to concentrate on in the later phases of his work, from around 1930 till his death in 1952, was the analysis of specific individual works. This analysis was applied to what I have called the *internal relations* of art.

Raphael's starting point in such studies as we find in *The Demands of Art*[26] was symmetrical to that of Clark, though his ultimate ambition was the same: to connect individual works of art—specific configurations, as he called them—with the specific social reality within which they were produced and consumed. Like Clark, Raphael established a method which circumvented many of the criticisms put forward by opponents of the social history of art. His notion of the "immanent sociology of the art work"—the idea that the formal laws governing the construction and composition of the work of art and the laws of connection among the various kinds of art were the same as the laws of association and relation operative in the social conditions—may be problematic in the more extreme forms in which he presented it, but he did lay the foundations of an approach which was not dependent on dubious causal laws or on analogies between broad social categories and artistic forms.

The Sociology and Science of Art

Whether the two methods of Clark and Raphael are complementary and, even, compatible; whether they may be combined in a unified art historical approach, is the methodological question which remains to us. It was posited as early as 1933, by

[24] R. Debray, "Motifs: Image of the People", *New Left Review,* No. 94, Nov.-Dec. 1975, p. 57.

[25] *Ibid.,* pp. 58-9.

[26] M. Raphael, *The Demands of Art,* Bollingen Foundation, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1968.

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Raphael in his "Marxist Theory of Art",[27] in which he defined the twin modes of the 'sociology of art' and the 'science of art'. We might think of them as the realisations in art history of historical materialism and dialectical materialism respectively. Their definition and relation constitute the problematic of contemporary art history as I understand it.

It should be clear that this problematic, which I have been trying to outline, involves something more than a shift away from panoramic 'World Histories' on the scale of Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, and an inclination towards specific investigations of concrete particulars; that is, a change in the mode of application of a continuing historical method. It entails, rather, a decisive disjuncture in that method itself and its reconstitution through the philosophical method of Marxism (dialectical materialism) as a historical method (historical materialism) purged of idealist and idealist-historicist notions. The point is not that historical generalisations become impossible but that large-scale historical theses must be credible in terms of the particular. In Hegel's method, this is reversed. The particular is no more than a temporally determined expression of the general. It merely provides an illustration of the general evolution of Spirit: the human-headed Sphinx, half-covered by sand, stands for the whole culture of ancient Egypt. It is "a symbol of the Egyptian Spirit":

> "The human head looking out from the brute body, exhibits Spirit as it begins to emerge from the merely Natural—to tear itself loose therefrom and already look more freely around it; without, however, entirely freeing itself from the fetters Nature had imposed. The innumerable edifices of the Egyptians are half below the ground, and half rise above it into the air. The whole land is divided into a kingdom of life and a kingdom of death."[28]

No more is it the case that the result of the approach I am advocating will be a 'granular' history: a suspension of particle-like individual cases in some unspecified medium. The same methodological principles, which represent a real break with the practice of art historicism, must be applied to problems of transfer and transformation, passage and discontinuity, variation and fluctuation, whether they are examined synchronically—as occurring between coexisting works of art, at any one time—or diachronically—as occurring in specific sequences of works, arranged through time. In this way, the Marxist method of art history, as here understood, may approach the reconception of stylistic categories and evaluative terms, as they apply on both an individual and a supra-individual level, whilst avoiding such Hegelian formulations as the 'Style of an Epoch'.

The resolution of these difficulties must be included within the definition and relation of the domains of internal and external relations and of the respective methods which apply to them. An attempt at such a definition and relation needs now to be made not only theoretically, not only by the critique of previous authors and by the abstract study of methodologies, but above all by the *scientific* confrontation of method and the widest possible historical range of products, artefacts and works of art. Here, Raphael is once more a model. Defying modern hyper-specialisation, yet without making concessions to amateurism, he turned his analytical mind to the study of Paleolithic cave paintings, Neolithic pottery, Egyptian and Greek sculpture, Greek architecture, Romanesque churches, Italian, Dutch and French painting, Impressionism, Post Impressionism, Cubism and Expressionism, and the International Style in architecture, as well as to literature, philosophy, physics and economics.[29] A daunting task, to master so much material. But it shows how much there is to be done. I am reminded on Lenin's remark to Lunacharsky, after he had spent a night awake in Lesuchenko's library looking through his books on art: "What a fascinating field is the history of art. How much work there is in it for a marxist."[30]

Work in Progress

I shall not end on this most suitable point but rather on a personal note. I am at present preparing to undertake a study which will attempt to tackle the methodological problem I have tried to outline today, through an examination of a concrete historical conjuncture: America in the period of a major transformation in its economy, world political role and cultural life; America in the two decades from 1935 to 1955 when it emerged from a period of internal crisis to enter a new stage of

[27] M. Raphael, "La Théorie Marxiste de L'Art", in *Proudhon—Marx—Picasso: Trois études sur la sociologie de l'art*, Editions Excelsior, Paris, 1933, Ch. 2, pp. 123-85. An English translation is to be published by Lawrence & Wishart, London, in 1977.

[28] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, translated by J. Sibree, Dover, New York, 1956, p. 199.

[29] For an account of Raphael's life and works, see my essay "The Method of Max Raphael. Art History Set Back on its Feet", *Radical Philosophy*, No. 12, Winter, 1975, pp. 3-10.

[30] Quoted in T. Deutsche's *Not By Politics Alone—The Other Lenin*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1973, p. 184.

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boom growth and when the passage on an economic and social level was concomitant with a transformation of the dominant artistic genre—with the decline of documentary expression and the establishment of modernism.

My study will question in what ways the cultural production of a society may be said to 'document' that society and seek to discover a way of disclosing in cultural products the values and, even, the structure of the society in which they were made. It will ask whether all the products of a culture share, at some level, a common structure and, if so, whether it is a 'representation' of a deep level structure in society; or whether this very formulation carries within it a set of ideological assumptions which foreclose scientific investigation. It will attempt to answer these questions through an examination of certain defined categories of photographic production in America during a critical period of transition.

Constantly at the back of my mind will also be the awareness that the socio-historical method must find a basis on which to distinguish between those cultural products which *exhibit* the marks of their place and time, and those which *realise* them; that is, between those of which periodicity is *a property* and those of which it is *an object*: between the 'period piece' and the true work of art of a period. This is not to lend credence to the ideologically embalmed notion that the real meaning of art resides in "masterpieces, which owe their distinction . . . to the fact that their message is universally valid, for any time and place".[31] But to take seriously the question of absolute values which here exists only on the level of assertion.[32]

The distinction may not be simple—there may be a whole spectrum of cases—but without it the social history of art will be unable to answer the question of evaluation or confront the paradox which lies at its heart: that works superficially touched by their times remain embedded within them, whilst works which penetrate their times most deeply are, contradictorily, by a simultaneous act of 'internal distantiation', most able to transcend them. There are few more poignant examples of this than the photographs of Walker Evans.

This is the proper place to end; with the prospect of real history before us. Much of what has come before has been no more than a sign at a border post saying: "Go on in this direction and you will find the real." As Louis Althusser has written:

> "You can stay indefinitely at the frontier line, ceaselessly repeating concrete! concrete! real! real!"
>
> "Or, on the contrary, you can cross the frontier for good and penetrate into the domain of reality and embark 'seriously on its study' as Marx puts it in *The German Ideology*. Then the signal will have played its practical part. It remains in the old domain, in the domain *abandoned* by the very fact of *'displacement'*. There you are face to face with your real object, obliged to forge the requisite and adequate concepts, to think it. . . . You have abandoned the old domain, the old concepts. Here you are in a new domain, for which new concepts will give you the knowledge. The sign that a real change in locus and problematic has occurred, and that a new adventure is beginning, the adventure of science in development."[33]

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[31] J. S. Ackerman, "Western Art History", *Art & Archaeology*, Humanistic Scholarship in America. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1963, p. 217.

Quoted in K. Forster, "Critical History of Art, or Transfiguration of Values?" *New Literary History*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Spring, 1972, pp. 459-70.

Forster points out that to enquire into a work of art's 'universal' significance is precisely to enquire into its *historical* significance.

[32] The problem of values occupies an important place in Raphael's "Empirical Science of Art" (*The Demands of Art*, pp. 205-38). It is usual to contrast such views with those of G. V. Plekhanov. However, despite the currency of ideas to the contrary—ideas which Plekhanov did much to encourage—Plekhanov did not hold to a strictly relativist approach. In *Art and Social Life* (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1957, p. 68 ff.), we see him rejecting the relativist arguments of the young Lunacharsky, by distinguishing 'objective' from 'absolute' criteria for judging art. There are two such 'objective' criteria: the first involves a measure of internal coherence—'the more the form of an artistic production corresponds to its idea, the more successful it is" (p. 69); and the second implies a hierarchy of ideas which furnish the basis for success in works of art to the degree to which they present reality undistorted (p. 70). Cf. also M. Rosenthal, "Relative versus Absolute Criteria in Art", reprinted in *Artery*, No. 10, Summer, 1976, pp. 14-17.

[33] Althusser, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-5.

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